Top o' the Mornin'

Seumas MacManus

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TOP O' THE MORNIN'

SOME SEUMAS MacMANUS BOOKS

YOURSELF AND THE NEIGHBORS
LO, AND BEHOLD YE!
A LAD OF THE O'FRIELS
DONEGAL FAIRY STORIES
IN CHIMNEY CORNERS
DOCTOR KILGANNON
THE RED POOCHER
BALLADS OF A COUNTRY BOY

TOP O' THE MORNIN'

BY

SEUMAS MacMANUS

Author of "Lo, and Behold Ye!," "Yourself and the Neighbors," "Donegal Fairy Stories," etc.

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To

EDWARD BOK

WITH ESTEEM

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TOP O' THE MORNIN'

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I

THE LORD MAYOR O' BUFFALO

IT was in smiling April it all happened; and the Lord Mayor o' Buffalo dawned on Donegal—bringing pleasure and pride to the simple, noble hearts of Barney Gallagher and his good wife, Rosie.

The first rumor of the great man's coming reached Barney and Rosie through the columns of the *Donegal Vindicator.* Barney had been in town that same day selling a load of turf—and brought three and eleven pence and the *Vindicator* back home with him to Rosie. He brought a wet hide home with him likewise—for the thunder showers caught the poor fellow only half ways home, drenching him to the skin. He was drying himself out by the fire after a hearty supper, and reeking to the rafters a pipe of Doherty's best tobacco—as happy as if he was sitting in heaven's hall—and Rosie in the chimney corner fornenst him entertaining him with the world's wonders

out of the *Vindicator,* when she stumbled upon the extraordinary news.

"Read it, again, Rosie *a chroidhe,"* Barney said, holding the pipe out of his mouth, with astonishment.

And Rosie read again how the Lord Mayor o' Buffalo (the newspaper man, knowing no better, called him plain Mayor)—how the Lord Mayor o' Buffalo, ordered abroad by his doctor, had landed in Cork on the Tuesday a week past, and was presently prowling happily around the place in Tyrone where his mother was born when she was a child. And that as Father Pat Gillogley's own brother of Donegal town was head of the Cathedral priests in Buffalo and a particular friend of the Lord Mayor, the Lord Mayor was coming through to see Donegal's beauties, and pass a night with Father Pat, himself, before going further.

"Well, well, well, well!" said Rosie, lowering the paper and looking into the ashes. "Well, well, well!" said she. "There's my draim read—and wee Shusie's letter unriddled at the same time!"

Barney solemnly nodded his head. He knew that their little Susie who, breaking her heart with home-sickness, was now three years in Buffalo—with Johnny and Patsy—and who lived, as she had often told them, in the self-same street

with the Lord Mayor, had three months ago threatened to send a beautiful American shawl to her mother, and a silk tie to her father—with the very first friend she'd find going home from there. And following this up in her very last letter, she had dropped a mysterious hint that they'd soon get a pleasant surprise.

Said Rosie, "Three times in the fortnight that's gone, I dreamt of a white horse, which, as you know, means a visit from a welcome sthranger."

Barney solemnly nodded his head again at the turf blaze as he puffed his pipe. He knew that Rosie's reading of dreams was good as gospel.

Said Rosie, "The Lord Mayor 'ill have the presents and messages from wee Shusie to us, God bliss and guard her ever in the sthranger's lan'. She'll have given him all particulars how to know our house, and his coach will stop at our door, passin' on his way to Father Pat. Belike he'll not be able to spend more than an evenin' with us when he's on his way. But he'll maybe be fit to return again afther he's got enough o' his reverence (May the Lord above long spare him!)."

Instead of pleased, it was flustered completely Barney was. So alarmed that the pipe nearly dropped from his teeth. And he said, "Rosie, darlin', I haven't a daicent dud to meet a Lord

Mayor in. And for wee Shusie's sake, I wouldn't take ten pound and show meself in these year-o'-wans to him. Shusie 'ud never lift her head again in Buffalo if she heerd it."

"Whisht with you, man alive!" said Rosie. "The little brannet calf 'ill walk to Donegal fair the morrow's morn and buy both of us new rig-outs. The same calf 'ill fetch five pounds if it'll fetch a penny."

"But, Rosie," said Barney, more frightened still, "the calf is to pay the rent."

"Never mind," said Rosie philosophically, "God'll pay the rent. 'Tis not the first time he did it." Barney just bowed his head—in acceptance and acknowledgment. "Thrue for ye!" he said reverently.

The only question then that puzzled Rosie was what presents should she give the Lord Mayor o' Buffalo in token of his kindness. Barney, good-natured blunderer that he always was, suggested in turn, a laying hen, a *mescan* of Rosie's own yellow butter, a bag of potatoes, a hive of bees —rising more generous at each suggestion, in response to Rosie's growing disgust which he thought he drew on him by niggardliness.

Said Rosie, "I know what will delight him. You'll give him to take back to Buffalo the best blackthorn stick that the woods grow, and meself

'ill knit him two pairs of ringed and ribbed socks —green and yellow—the natest my fingers can knit."

Barney slapped his leg resoundingly. "By the boots, Rosie," he said, "ye'll make the man happy for life and delight the heart of him here and hereafter. Ye have a wonderful head-piece on ye, Rosie *agra.*"

And Barney looked open-mouthed admiration at this treasure of a wife that was his. 'Twas almost a joy to him to know that he had been, from their wedding day to this day, nothing but a stupid blunderer—because he thereby gave this wonderful wife of his never-ending opportunity for the exercise of her guiding genius.

"He'll be fit to tell us," said Barney, "just how Johnny looks, and whether Patsy has got over the heart-burn that used to plague him every time he ate crubeens and cabbage.—When he knows Shusie, of course he'll know our two brave boys, likewise."

"Whisht," said Rosie impatiently. "He knows them, of course. But I'm certain he never heerd tell of Patsy's heartburn. So, don't go makin' a blatherskite o' yourself inquirin' about such things. 'Twouldn't be no bit o' harm, however, to hint to him that Patsy's bein' mentionin' in every letter

he sent this last year, that he'd be happy for life if he only got on the police."

"Rosie," said Barney, "I'll do everything ye tell me, and nothing ye don't tell me.—But I'm at the same time thinkin'," he added, "that it would be a long sight better for yourself to be spokesman, Rosie. It'll do meself and yourself more credit if I'm only required to nod me head to everything you say."

"It 'ud never do, ye *gomachan!*" said Rosie. "And moreover, it would he highly unmodest of me."

"I never open my mouth, Rosie, but I put my foot in it," Barney protested.

"Ay, oftener your two feet, Barney, *a stor,*" Rosie answered patiently.

"Me two feet first and all of me after," Barney amended the charge. "That's me for you, every time, Rosie darlin'."

"But," said Rosie, "I'll give you a good drillin' in all that you're to do and say: and you'll only have to remimber my directions and follow them."

And Barney replied lugubriously, "That's all, Rosie." But he shook his head at the cat that was curled up between Rosie and the chimney corner, purring as though she didn't care if a regiment of Lord Mayors were to descend upon Don-

egal. Barney thought how happy it would be to be a cat.

When, before retiring, they knelt to say their nightly rosary—with their feet turned to the fire—Barney's stockinged toes comforted in the warm ashes—Rosie added to her usual string of requests, "One Pather an' Ave to God for the Lord Mayor o' Buffalo—to save him from accidents, drownding, or sudden daith—to bliss and prosper, counsel and console him, now and at the hour of daith. Amen."

And a busy time had both of them between then and the day that the great man was due. And a trying time had Rosie—on whose broad shoulders, of course, all the responsibility fell. For Barney, light-heartedly acknowledging that he wasn't used to entertaining Lord Mayors—and that, anyhow, the only one who could do anything right was Rosie, the man in the gap—cast care aside, smoked his pipe, and just did as he was directed.

As was promised for it, the calf had, of course, walked to the fair of Donegal, was bargained about and sold for five pound ten, by Rosie. The man who bought the calf, indeed, thought it was Barney who sold it to him. But Barney, who had opened his mouth every time only to translate to the purchaser the nods, winks, and shrugs of

Rosie—Barney knew better. And the wise neighbors also. And new and handsome rig-outs for both man and wife resulted from the little animal's sale. The contingency of rent was now in God's hands. But Barney had a suit of homespun that no Lord Mayor might be ashamed to meet—or could afterwards talk scandal about in Buffalo—and Rosie, a linsey-woolsey dress that would adorn any Lord Mayor's wife.

But nothing was too good or too dear for the occasion and man. On their way home from the fair, they had fully discussed and fixed the Lord Mayor's rank. He wasn't, of course, as great a man as Daniel O'Connell—the Great Dan—but he was probably a greater man than Father Pat—in ways.

They made it their business when in town to find out for certain that the Lord Mayor should arrive by coach at Father Pat's parochial house on the Wednesday following—coming, as they had anticipated, through Barnesmore Mountain Gap, and passing their very door. "'Tis only five days we have, Barney," said Rosie, "and we must make the most of it."

So, the very next evening, she started Barney at his rehearsals when he got in from weeding his potatoes. She found a Lord Mayor in Little Dinny Managhan, the cripple, who, though he had

to use crutches for his body's aiding, needed none to aid his nimble mind. He made a magnificent Lord Mayor, did Dinny—would have put many a real Lord Mayor of them to the blush, in fact—by reason that he was so affable, so eloquent, and "so well accentuated"—as Barney Gallagher described the delightful Buffalonian accent that little Dinny had conjured up for the part. Dinny would come hopping up the way, descend from an imaginary carriage opposite Barney's door, hop down to the door and politely give it a crack with his crutch—upon which Barney would emerge, curtsey like a French Count and politely inquire who had the honor of addressing him. The Lord Mayor of Buffalo then introduced himself in the choice language cultivated by Lord Mayors. Whereupon Barney, giving him a hearty Irish *cead mile failte* (hundred thousand welcomes) politely invited him "within side our humble risidence"—where he presented him to Rosie, to whom the Lord Mayor doffed an imaginary silk hat that must have cost at least ten pounds. You could see the shine of it dazzle you, so realistic was Dinny's acting.

While Rosie prepared the usual cup of tea, with toast and eggs, for his Lordship, Barney proceeded with his lines. Toast and tea were always real—and therefore a great incentive to his

Lordship to appear in his rôle early and often. Barney, indeed, thought they should be no more solid than the silk hat. But Dinny considered, very emphatically, that the real tea, eggs and toast were indispensable to his proper feeling, and filling, the part. And, indeed, the large-hearted Rosie considered so too. Dinny was such a roaring success as Lord Mayor—especially at the table—that Barney, if anyone would bet with him, wanted to wager his head against a ha'penny that half the Lord Mayors in America couldn't hold a candle to Dinny when it came to real downright brilliant Lord Mayoring. He could never get any takers, however. For Rosie heartily agreed with Barney. And Dinny, himself, likewise.

At times when Dinny wasn't to the fore to impersonate his Lordship, Rosie, who, as we hinted had a head-piece on her, invented a Lord Mayor in the shape of a bog-oak stump which Barney had brought in to burn. Barney preferred the bog-oak Lord Mayor—by reason he could talk more collectedly to it than he could to Dinny, whose brilliancy sometimes dumbfounded him. Moreover, it never smiled at him, like Dinny used to do when he blundered.

And, sure, if Rosie had been any other woman than Rosie, her heart would have been just broken

with this man's blundering. After she'd have nine times shown him the correct way to bow and address the Lord Mayor, and both of them would feel sure he was letter-perfect as any Prince, he'd put his foot in it the tenth time—make a brose of it, as Rosie said—and have to begin all over.

"Ah, Rosie, darling," Barney would say then, "'tis as brilliant as a bullock, I am. You'd better give me up as a bad case, and be spokesman your own self." Rosie, wonderful woman that she was, never once broke her temper or lost her patience with him. "No, Barney, *a stor,*" she'd say encouragingly, "it's grand entirely you're gettin' on. If you keep improvin' at the same rate, your fine manners 'ill make the Lord Mayor o' Buffalo, himself, ashamed for his own middlin' ones. Try it again, Barney."

"Meself never was used to Lord Mayors," Barney would excuse himself.

"Better late than never, Barney," Rosie would encourage him. "We'll break you in this time. And for the rest o' your life meetin' Lord Mayors 'ill come as natural to you as meetin' your breakfast."

So there could be no mistake, and that the Lord Mayor could not pass by without knowing just where to call, Rosie had a letter sent to him at Omagh, where, the papers said, he was to spend

the day before reaching Donegal—a letter composed by her own self but penned by Dinny, informing the Lord Mayor that they were the father and mother of little Susie who lived in the same street with him in Buffalo and from whom he probably had some messages—and giving him the necessary directions, signs and tokens of their little house, and its situation, so that he could not pass them by mistake, on his way to Father Pat Gillogley.

Neighbors, of course, learnt from little Dinny that Barney Gallagher and Rosie were expecting a call from no less than the Lord Mayor of Buffalo—and that big doings were going on at Rosie's in preparation. Even it reached the ears of Father Pat Gillogley—a man whose humor was equaled only by his big-heartedness. And when Rosie, on the day before his coming, went around borrowing from the neighbors Mrs. Meehan's napkins, and John Quinn's fancy cups and saucers, Mary Quigly's two silver spoons, Mrs. Donnelly's silver fork, and Sally Clary's two knives of silver also—she, being human after all, couldn't help showing just the least taste in the world of condescension. For a canonized saint, even, it would be hard to let the chance go by. Out of Rosie's extraordinary goodness and kindness, indeed, she showed only such very little con-

descension that the neighbors praised her unstintedly—and put up their ungrudging prayers for a successful visit from the Lord Mayor. And she thanked them just as earnestly as if she thought it wouldn't be a success but for their prayers. With both a smile and a glint in his eye, Father Pat listened to the neighbors' wondering accounts of the great doings.

The big day itself at length came—and the hour. At the last minute, Rosie, General in charge, changed the plan of campaign. It might be worse etiquette but 'twas better Irish for them, instead of waiting the Lord Mayor's knock, to have themselves ready on the road, and give him *cead mile failte* as his carriage pulled up. Consequently, when, after a creel-full of trouble, Rosie had got Barney dressed to perfection from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, and fit to meet monarchs, much less Lord Mayors, and herself decked out in her best also, a table spread to gladden a King, tea-pot hot and kettle singing on the hob, they took their stand on the road, within view of knots of sympathetic neighbors who watched from the hillsides—and Rosie filled up the waiting time putting Barney again through his speeches.

At long last the carriage swung into sight around the bend of the road with such a swish and

swirl as was just to be expected from the carriage of a real Lord Mayor—temporarily unnerving Barney and filling him with confusion. It came tearing down toward them like the railway trains they'd heard tell of rushing into Dublin—never slackened its pace as it drew near, but quickened if anything. At this Barney began making all desperate signs and shouts to the driver that this was the place to stop, while Rosie was tugging Barney by the coat-tails to save him from suicide—for in his alarm lest the Lord Mayor shouldn't recognize the right house, and stop, Barney was now almost prepared to throw his own body under the wheels to trig them. The driver just looked at the two of them crossly, and the Lord Mayor, from inside the carriage, curiously—and the carriage and the Lord Mayor tore past them and were soon out of sight around the next bend. And to the grief-stricken Barney and the dumbfounded Rosie, all the hopes in the world seemed to go out of sight with them! If the catastrophe needed a crown, it was supplied by the sincere sympathy of the neighbors.

Silence sat between them over their once happy hearth all that night, till, drawing on bed-time, Rosie at length said soothingly, "Never mind, Barney *agra,* he's uppish and proud like the Mac Diarmids who made a hundred and fifty pound out

of the fish yon time and would never notice poor people no more."

"That's just the matter with the man," said Barney, more in sorrow than anger.

And then they knelt to a very fervent rosary, from which when they arose, they had forgiven the man with all their hearts. And blotted him from their memory—they thought.

It was the next afternoon, when Barney was called in haste from his potato weeding in the Stoney Park—to find, to his consternation, when he entered the house, Father Pat and the Lord Mayor o' Buffalo, taking tea with Rosie!—and he chatting with her like a human being!

Barney, flustered with surprise and joy, began making his different bows to the Lord Mayor, and, higgledy-piggledy, mixing up scraps from all his speeches—till Rosie, by a brave tug at his coat-tails, landed him in a straw-bottomed chair where she had to pin him for a couple of minutes till he got partial presence of mind again.

The Lord Mayor said he understood that he had the honor of living on the same street in Buffalo with their little daughter—and apologized because, partly from illness and partly from business, he didn't know even the people in his own street as a neighbor should.

Before Rosie could stop him, Barney had ex-

pressed his amazement that the gentleman should not know Shusie—little Shusie of the fair hair, who is breaking her heart for the sight of home again—little Shusie who, once seen, was never forgotten. Did he really mean to say he didn't know their wee Shusie? Own sister to Johnny and Patsy—whom the Lord Mayor must, of course, know—the two boys who were striving to get on the Buffalo police.

The Lord Mayor sorrowfully confessed he didn't even know Johnny and Patsy—and it was only Rosie's shaking her head and making a face at Barney that prevented Barney from blundering out the words that were on the tip of his tongue, "Well, what kind of a quare sort of a Lord Mayor are ye, anyhow?" But if Rosie stopped his verbal expression, the hopeless head-shake with which Barney subsided, expressed his mind on the subject to the Lord Mayor far more eloquently than beggarly words ever could. And drew from the Lord Mayor the shame-faced confession that he certainly didn't know as well as he should, half the good people he was Lord Mayoring over. But, now that his eyes were opened, he was going to mend his ways when he went back.

An encouraging nod of Barney's head showed the Lord Mayor that his good resolution brought him both forgiveness and approbation.

The very first acquaintance he was going to cultivate was Susie—and to cure her homesickness, he would send her in the service of a family that was coming to spend the long beautiful summer in Ireland.

God bliss him!—most fervently in one voice from both Rosie and Barney.

—And the Buffalo police force, for its greater efficiency, should and must immediately have the services of the sons of such a fine father and mother.

To give vent to the cumulative joy that swelled her heart, Rosie could find no fitting words. She just tried to speak, but ignominiously failed—and buried her face in her handkerchief. Barney was worse than his wife.

The Lord Mayor and Father Pat, carrying two pleased hearts away from Barney Gallagher's thatched cottage, left two exalted hearts behind.

The marveling neighbors were watching from the hillsides.

II

THE WIDOW MEEHAN'S CASSIMEER SHAWL

FATHER PAT, when he was admirin' it, called it, I believe, a Cashmere shawl; but as Widow Meehan owned it, she had the best right to know; and she called it a Cassimeer.

There isn't any mistake about it, it was a delight of a shawl; and every woman from the top of the parish to the foot of it consented as much when they rolled their eyes and wished to Heaven that Providence had sent them such another.

But it wasn't Providence who sent it to Mrs. Meehan at all at all. It was Partholan McCue who fetched it home from America to her, a present from her gran'-niece Annie in Philadelphy; for poor Annie, God bless her, never forgot little kindnesses to the woman who reared her. Many's the pound note she sent home to her out of her little earnin's from the stranger.

Mrs. Meehan, when she got this present, was as happy as a mavish in May and as proud as a lord's lady. Half of the parish thronged to see the shawl, and Mrs. Meehan herself carried it

to the other half; and the poor woman near lost her sleep over it.

She was mortial fond of gossip and going about, anyhow, was the Widow Meehan.

But she usually did her visitin' in raison and in saison—till the Cassimeer came. Then her visitin', as ye may well suppose, knew neither saison or raison. And when her one son, Barney (known as Barney Brian)—the most mischievous vagabond the parish ever knew—who remained at home with her, working for whomsoever employed him, and holding the roof over them both, would come in from Johnnie Durneen's Nor'-aist Park at dinner-time, ravenous with the fair dint of the hunger, and find the hearth black, and hear that his mother was doin' padrole with her Cassimeer in the upper end of the parish, Barney, poor boy, began to suspicion that the same Cassimeer was going to be a sore trial to his temper; and he wished in his heart that it was an armchair poor Annie had sent his mother.

"I wish to goodness," Barney Brian said, "there would come a dacent thief into the country."

"Musha, for what, Barney!" said his mother.

"Just, mother," says Barney, "that he might steal your Cassimeer shawl."

"Arrah, Barney boy, but it's the bad heart ye have."

"If you, mother," says Barney, says he, "come in from a hard mornin's work behind a spade, and the stomach of ye cryin' for its dinner, and that ye found neither trace nor track of dinner afore ye, but found me who should have it waiting, piping hot for ye, gone sthravaguin' off to the other end of the parish to show the neighbours a new pair of Cassimeer trousers (suppose) that me cousin Annie had sent me, a present from the States—I'm thinkin' your heart would take sides with your stomach, and not wish very well to my Cassimeer breeches. . . . I wish to goodness, mother, it was a pot and pot-stick Annie had sent ye home."

And the widow would shake her head, and turn up her eyes at this, and say, "Well, may the Lord forgive ye, Barney Brian, for throwin' slights on my beautiful Cassimeer shawl, like that!"

And Barney Brian 'ud reply, "Well, mother, if I never have to ask the Lord's forgiveness for greater, I'll not trimble much when I'm awaitin' on" (about to die).

The first day poor Barney lost his dinner over the Cassimeer, he didn't take it so badly at all in his heart. Nor the second day, nor third day either. But when he met with the same trial five

times inside of one week, faith! Barney got rumbuncktious. He very well thought that it was fitter for his mother to be bendin' over the dinner-pot than padrollin' the parish with the bottom of the trunk on her back; he relieved his mind to her in a kindly way—for Barney Brian was never the boy to turn the ill word on his own mother—but very seriously; for he was detarmined that, Cassimeer or no Cassimeer, he wasn't to be done out of his dinner for the time to come. "For I used to admire and think it a handsome shawl when it come first, mother. But I now see that the beauty a man sees in a thing depends entirely on the state of his stomach. Every time, now, that I miss another dinner over it, that shawl is getting to look more and more like a badly patched pratie-bag."

And "Barney, Barney!" says she, "are ye not afeerd of a judgment fallin' from Heaven on ye —to talk that way of my grand Cassimeer?"

"I'm afeerd only," says Barney back to her— "afeerd only, mother, that I should apologize to the pratie-bag. It brings me a dinner; and the Cassimeer loses me one. And I'm afeerd, moreover, mother darlin', that if ye don't hide the same Cassimeer under the lowermost article in the clothes-chist, and then put a good strong padlock on the chist, I'll be tempted to do something des-

perate to it." It's in a fright of a temper Barney, the soul, was: and, indeed small wonder for that.

And whenever Barney got vexed like this, the Widow Meehan always found it a good plan to either coax him to go out up the hill and let the temper blow off him, or else to stroll out herself, till the boy would have simmered down. And this time she sayed, says she, "Well Barney *a bhuachaill,* you're past yourself just now, and so I'm steppin' without, till you go past the boil."

But the widow hadn't reached the door when she halted up sudden, and she says all in a fright: "In the name of Peter, Barney my heart, who do you think is crossin' Nell Dinneen's mearin' below?"

"I don't know, mother," says Barney, says he, shortly enough, "nor what's more—not giving you a short answer—do I care."

The widow was too flurried to mind Barney's shortness. Says she: "Of all the unwelcome women this side of Kingdom-come, it's no other than your poor father—may God be merciful to him!—your poor father's Cousin Bid from the Oileigh parish. She has trolloped over ten miles of country this morning, and is making, sure enough, for the Dhrimholme parish, on a visit to her Uncle Andy. Barney *a chara,* I'll close me-

self into the room here, and you'll say I'm gone over to help to lay out Peggy Carney, of the Altbeag, that died this morning. I would as soon meet the scarlet faiver as your father's Cousin Bid, for she's an ill-tongued, ill-hearted, bitter pill of a woman—and it goes sore against the grain of me to have to show her the fair face, as I always do; and though she shows me the fair face, too, I always feel that she's cuttin' me throat inside her heart, while she's speakin' me smooth and sweet. I'll just step inside the room-door here till she's gone again."

"Mother," says Barney, says he, "if it's your notion that I'm goin' to sin me soul tellin' lies for you to my father's Cousin Bid, or to anywan else, while you listen from behind the doore, you're laborin' under a very great mistake entirely, let me tell you. If you want anywan to tell lies for ye, mother, just stay out here and tell them yourself."

"Do as your mother tells ye, Barney Brian," was all she said, and stepped in behind the room-door, and closed it. But she opened it again to put out her head, and call under her breath, "And, Barney, hang up that Cassimeer where that woman 'ill be sure to see it."

In faith, it was small enough was the likin' even Barney had ever for his father's Cousin Bid, and

it was less still was his likin' for her since, on the Candlemas twelvemonth afore, she had carried her ill-heart and bad tongue over to Derryalt, where he was coortin', and set purty wee Mary Kennedy's people again' him. And he then promised if it should ever come his way to do his father's Cousin Bid an ill turn, he'd think three times afore he'd allow his conscience to hold him.

When his father's Cousin Bid stepped over the threshel, with a wee bunch of greeneries atween her fingers and a ready "God save all here!" on her tongue, Barney, who was sittin' by the fire with his back to the door, just turned his head slow, looked her up and down, and then give her a nod. He pointed to a chair, without puttin' a move out of himself: and Bid, a good bit mystified, went and sat down on it. And Barney begun lookin' into the fire.

"*Maise,* Barney," says she, "what's makin' you look so mortal glum? or what's the matter with ye, at all at all?"

Then Barney turned his eyes again on her, and he says sorrowfully—

"Bridget Managhan, ye ought to feel sore ashamed of yourself."

"And for why, Barney Brian?" says Bid, says she, bridling.

"Bridget Managhan," says Barney, says he, reproachfully, "ye add insult to injury."

Bid was both mixed and mystified. Says she—

"For goodness' sake, Barney Brian, tell me what are ye dhrivin' at, anyhow?"

Barney put up one hand to one eye and, as it seemed to the consternated Bid, rubbed away a tear; and he then put up another hand to the other eye, and rubbed away another tear.

"Bridget Managhan," says he then, turnin' hurtin' eyes on her—"Bridget Managhan," says he, "ye never came anear either the wake or the funeral, and you're the last in the worl' I would have expected such a slight from. I say ye ought to feel sore ashamed of yourself."

"The wake!" says Bid, all open-mouthed. "And the funeral!" says she, with the eyes of her startin'.

"The wake," says Barney, says he, solemn, "and the funeral—never came anear one or the other of them, and never sent as much as a message. I say, how can ye show your face in this house—and not a blush on it either?"

"For the Lord's sake, Barney Brian," says Bridget, says she, "will ye tell me at oncet what wake ye're talkin' of, and what funeral?"

Poor Barney looked into the fire, and, says he, with a blurt, "me poor mother's wake, of course,

and funeral—may God be merciful to her soul! for it's she was the good mother to me, anyhow —barrin' at times."

"Barney, Barney Brian, *a mhic,"* says she, all alarmed, "ye don't railly mean to tell me that your mother's dead?"

"Ay, dead, poor woman," says Barney, says he, wipin' his eyes with both his sleeves—"dead, and the green quilt over her. Don't try for to tell me, Bridget Managhan," says he, "that ye didn't hear it and know all about it. Don't try for to tell me suchan a story—for I'll not take it in."

"God rest her, poor woman!" says Bid first. And then says she: "Barney Brian, may I never move from the ground I'm sittin' on, or never ate the bread of corn again, if I'm not now in the first place I ever heard tale, tidin's, or whisper, of your poor mother's daith."

"Och, och!" says Barney, says he, as busy as he could be with the troubles of his own mind.

"Heaven help ye and support ye in your trouble, poor soul!" says she. "I knew," says she, "for I heerd it from my Uncle Andy at the fair of the Purt (last Chewsday was a month) that your poor mother was complainin' a bit; but a word further I never heerd. Meself thought it was only the oul' complaint of the win' about the heart was

troublin' her, and that she'd work it off in a couple of days. What was it took her?"

"Oh, just the win' about the heart—her oul' complaint. It struck her first (this last time) of a Chewsday night, just as she was milkin' the brannet cow. Meself give her a hot dhrink with plenty of pepper in it, and put her to bed, thinkin' she would be well again, and as sound as a bell, in the mornin'. But *faroir!* she never knew aise again. It was worse she was, instead of better, in the mornin'. The win' was all round her heart; she could feel it rollin' and rollin' about like a large pittatie; and it gathered and gathered till it was the size of your head afore the night come; and next mornin' it was the size of a hand-shaking of hay; and from that on we knew there wasn't any hope for her. We did all we could, and Molly Carribin of Kilraine tried five cures on her; but it was only worse she got. Father Pat, God bliss him, we had to rouse him out of his bed in the middle of the night, a Sathurday night, and he come and give her the last rites, and bid her Godspeed on the long journey. And in the early hours of Sunday mornin', just near about the screek o' day, she—she"—poor Barney he broke down here and blubbered—"she bid me good-bye, and asked for God to bliss me and watch over me; and—and—then she w-w-went away with herself. Booh-

hooh!" And poor Barney, the soul, blurted and cried.

"*Maise,* Barney," says Bid, says she; "poor soul, I'm sorry from my heart for your trouble! And to think that I should never have heerd one word of it."

"It was a splendid wake," says Barney, says he, more cheerily and proudly-like, "a splendid wake and a grand funeral. At the wake the house was filled to the doores; and at the funeral there was half a mile of ground, and ye couldn't drop a pin on it but it would fall on someone's head."

"A proud day for ye, Barney," says Bid.

"Yes," says Barney. "But that isn't what I have wanted to tell ye. . . . Are ye listenin' to me, Bid Managhan?"

"I'm listenin' as hard as I can," says Bid, says she, leanin' forrid.

"My mother, my poor mother (may Heaven be her bed!), she—she—well, everyone knows she had a bit of a temper of her own!"

Bid Managhan she gave a snort at this, and then she took a snuff out of the snuff-box. And then, says she, "There's few 'ud deny that."

"A temper she had," says Barney, says he, "and a tongue."

"And a tongue—yis," says Bid, says she, clickin' down the lid on her snuff-box with venom.

"Did I hear any noise in that room below?" says she then, hasty, and lookin' hard at the closed room-door. And sure enough there had come from the room something strangely like a "Hagh!" from atween clenched teeth.

"Maybe, indeed, ye did," says Barney, says he, and he not one bit discommoded, "for me poor calf, poor thing, got the elf-shot the day afore yesterday, and for heat's sake and comfort, I took it and put it intil the room; and it breathes hard sometimes. . . . But as I was sayin'," says he, "though the poor woman is now dead, and we should maybe leave her wee faults in the grave with her. . . . That calf *is* breathin' hard; it's a painful complaint is the elf-shot . . . leave her wee faults in the grave with her," says he; "still we can't deny at all at all that she had her little share of faults, like the rest of us—and maybe a thrifle more."

"Ay, and maybe a thrifle more," says Bid, says she, with great satisfaction entirely, near amost smackin' her lips over it.

"The poor woman's dead and gone," says Barney, "and only for that I might go further—though I am her own son—and say that she might aisily ha' been a better-hearted and candider friend to some people—yourself for one," says he.

Bid, she felt mightly encouraged by the tone of

Barney's remarks. She gave another snort. "The poor woman's dead, and gone to her reckonin'," says she; "and only for that I might go further and say that she was as bitter-tongued a woman as ever stepped in shoe-leather, and——"

"Go on," says Barney, says he. "Don't mind; it's that calf."

"And only she's dead and gone," says she, "and I hope got forgiveness from the Lord—only for that," says she, "I would say of her that I'd prefer gettin' a process any day to meetin' her. For, though I knew she would cut my throat, if she could, with one smile, myself had to meet her with a fair face and smile back at her. . . . That calf of yours must be in sore throuble, Barney. . . . And now there's the solemn sacred truth to ye. And only the poor woman's dead and gone—and forgiven, I hope—I could say all that of her—and more. And more."

"I know it," says Barney, shaking his head sorrowful-like. "I know it," says he. "Sure, I only know it too well—to me own pain. But you'll be rejoiced in the inside of your heart, Bid Managhan, to hear what's the news I have for ye, and that I've been comin' to. My mother, poor woman, had her eyes opened to her little faults afore she died," says he.

"Indeed!" says Bid, says she, surprised.

"Indeed," says Barney. "More especially had she her eyes opened—by some stroke of grace—to her onchristian traitment of you, and . . . Bad snuff to that calf, but it's unmannerly . . . and, I say, died repentant, and prayin' to have your forgiveness."

Says Bid, triumphant, "I'm a delighted woman to hear it. And—and—I suppose I must grant forgiveness to her—as she's dead," says she.

"It's good of ye—troth, it's good of ye, Bid," says Barney, says he; "and myself told her to die comforted, for that Bid Managhan was always a generous woman and a forgivin' one."

Bid just lowered her head to this.

"And, Bid," says Barney, "me poor mother considered she owed ye restitution for all the ill things she ever sayed of ye behind your back," says he.

"I'm glad to hear that the poor woman got into a Christian state of mind—even on her death-bed," says Bid, says she.

Barney got up, and went over to the dresser; and stooping under it, he drew out a pair of grand new spring-side boots that Micky Gallagher the shoemaker had only fetched home the night afore; and he fetched them over and left them down at Bid Managhan's feet.

"She said," said he, as he left them down, " 'It

is my daith-bed desire that my husband's Cousin Bid from the Oileigh parish should get my pair of new boots in part token of restitution for wrongs done her,'—So Bid, there ye are," says he.

Poor Bid she opened her eyes with wonder and delight, and says she, "Well, may God grant speedy forgiveness to the poor woman, and bring her straight to Heaven without e'er a look-in upon Purgatory good or bad. I think," says she, beginnin' without any more delay to take off her the boots she had on her—"I think," says she, "as these ould boots I have on me aren't hardly daicent enough to go visitin' at my Uncle Andy's in, I think I'll just put the new ones on me——"

"Bad snuff, say I again, to that calf.—Yis, surely, Bid, wear them on ye to your Uncle Andy's," says Barney, says he.

"Just see to that now, how parfect they fit me," says Bid, says she, steppin' out in them across the floor, and tryin' to see them herself and to show them to Barney at the same time. "They lie like a pair of gloves, Barney," says she.

"One 'ud think," says Barney, "that Micky Gallagher used your own foot for a last," says he.

"It's prayin' for your kind mother's soul I'll be," says she, "every time ever I put out my foot in them."

"Thanky, Bid; thanky," says Barney. "She'll be watchin' ye, and hearin' to ye out of Heaven; and it's herself 'll be the delighted woman to see that the brogues is so nate to your feet."

"May the delights of Heaven be with her always," says Bid from the depths of her heart. "If there's wan woman more nor another who desarved Heaven, for her right-livin' ways, and her good and charitable heart, myself doesn't know who that woman was, if it wasn't your mother," says she. "And," says she, "Barney, I'd advise ye to look after that calf, for it's sufferin' sore. Did ye hear that groan out of it?" says she.

"Thanky, thanky kindly, Bid, for your nice words.—Och! yes, I'm goin' to doctor the calf; I sent wee Johnnie Eamon over the hill an hour ago for Neddy Pat Ward, the cow-doctor. He'll soon be here, and he'll leave the calf better than new again," says he.

"I'm intendin'," says Bid, says she, "to call round by the graveyard, and say the rosary over your poor mother. God rest the good woman! Barney *a bhuachaill,* did ye ever in all your born days see a better fit anyhow?" And Bid was walkin' the floor and holdin' up her skirts.

"One would think they grew on your feet, Bid," says Barney. "But that isn't all. My poor mother sayed, moreover, 'It is my last desire and request

that my late husband's cousin, Bid Managhan, should, as a slight token of restitution for the evil I have wrongfully done her in my heart, have my best new linsey-woolsey skirt which hangs in the corner, over the out-shot bed,' and accordin'ly," says Barney, getting up and stretching to the corner over the out-shot bed, and reaching down his mother's lovely brown linsey-woolsey skirt to the astonished Bid—"Just slip it on ye over your own skirt, Bid," says he; "it'll be the handiest way of carryin' it."

Poor Bid. She couldn't speak for a full minute with the downright dint of the astonishment: only just hold out the skirt in her hand, as far away from her as she could, and gaze at it.

And when she come to her speeches, *"Maise,* may all the angels and saints and holy pathriots," says she, "unite together in carryin' your poor blessed and pious mother, body and soul, str'ight to Heaven's hall-door!"

"Bad snuff say I again to that calf," says Barney, says he, "with his groanin' and gruntin' there; he has no more manners nor breedin' than if he never was brought up about a Christian house."

"Restitution!" says Bid, say she, "for evil done me in her heart! It was surely the ravin' of daith that must 'a' been on the poor woman: for after all the pious and heavenly thoughts with which

the poor bliss'd woman's heart was *crivanned,* there wasn't room for a midge to wink one of its eyes. Restitution, *inagh!"*

"Oh, she wasn't by any means a bad-hearted woman, me mother," says Barney modestly; "nor, though I say it who maybe shouldn't, was she a woman given to either ill-tongue or ill-temper, or to thinkin' bad of any mortial under the sun," says he.

"Ill-tongue or ill-temper!" says Bid with hot indignation as she stood in the middle of the floor and slipped the linsey-woolsey over her head; "I would like to see the individial who'd *even* to your saintly souled mother, ill-tongue, ill-thought, or ill-temper. I'd like, I say, to see that individial—that impident and lying individial!" says Bid, shaking her fist at the air and grindin' her teeth. "Barney," says she, "I'll be steppin' on for Uncle Andy's. I'll look a whole swell in such a skirt and boots. Uncle Andy's people 'ill not know me at all at all. I'm goin' to call round by the graveyard, Barney, to say two rosaries for the repose of your bliss'd mother's soul."

"I'll be for ever thankful to ye," says Barney, says he.

"Don't say thanks, Barney Brian," says Bid, says she, solemn, "if ye don't want to insult me."

"And as for me poor mother lookin' down at ye

from the threshel of heaven, she'll pour blissin's back upon ye till ye're soaked to the skin with them and wade home wetshod. But, Bid, through me poor departed mother's grace, ye're goin' to be a still bigger swell yet, afore ye start for your Uncle Andy's."

"What!" says Bid, says she. "Ye don't surely mane for to say——"

"I mane," says Barney, says he, "for to say nothing only this—me poor mother, God rest her——"

"Amen, amen, with all my heart and soul," says Bid.

"—Says," says Barney, "'Likewise, to my late husband's dearly beloved cousin, and my good and sincere friend, Bridget Managhan of the Oil-eigh, I do hereby give, laive, and bequaith my bee-utiful Cassimeer shawl.'"

There suddenly come a groan from the room that made Bid Managhan start in the sait she sat upon.

"God help us, and His blissin' be about us all, day and night," says Bid, says she, cuttin' the sign of the Cross; "but doesn't that poor ill baste in the room below groan like a human or else a ghost—Barney Brian, what room did your poor mother die in?"

"In that same room," says Barney. "And,"

says Barney, never mindin' the frightened look that come into Bid's face, "as I was sayin'—'grant, give, bequaith, and bestow my magnificent Cassimeer shawl—the magnificentest in the barony, bar none—the aforesaid shawl bein' the same which Partlan McCue fetched from Philadelphy, from my gran'-niece Annie to me; and I wish her health, wealth, and the Lord's blissin', while she wears it and two threads of it stick together.' "

The eyes of Bid Managhan, as she listened to this, grew bigger and bigger, and when Barney got to his feet and opened the chist and took out and unfolded his mother's Cassimeer shawl, and held it up for Bid to see, the eyes of her were as large as small tay-saucers.

"Barney Brian," says she, when she got her breath with her, "durin' all the days I've been walkin' this worl', the sight of me never yet beheld a beautifuller or a grander or a magnificenter legacy than that. Barney Brian, that poor mother of yours died in the odium of sanctity, and the soul of her went up and into heaven on the shoulders of the seven vargins, the seven pathriots, and the seven archangels afore the breath was gone out of her body. Thanky, just slip it on me shoulders, Barney. Did ye—now tell me the gospel truth—*did* ye ever see a greater swell than I am? But

what will Uncle Andy's ones say? Barney, I'm going; and goin' round by the graveyard in order to say three rosaries for the everlastin' repose of that sainted woman's soul, your mother.—Good-bye, Barney, and may God comfort ye in your great loss, and His blissin ever be about you, and about your house and place." And she rolled up her old boots in her old shawl and placed them under her arm. "I may as well carry these with me," says she, "for maybe I'll meet some poor body 'ill be glad to get them," says she.

Says Barney, says he, "That's so, surely. And good-bye and good luck, and God be with ye," says he.

And down the floor she walked, headin' for the door, and she proud as a paycock that had got a new coat of feathers, and steppin' as pernicketty as if it was on eggs she was walkin'.

But with that the room-door (which was just inside the door of the house) burst open, and out of it steps the Widow Meehan, the face of her both black and blue and red all at the one time, with the fair dint of the rage.

Bid Managhan, she opened her mouth for a screech, but the sorra a screech or even a sound would come, and she just went white, and flopped down upon the floor, same as you'd drop a wet sack—flopped down sitting-wise, both her mouth

and her eyes as wide as ever they'd go, starin' at the vision afore her.

The Widow Meehan, without a word out of her, though her face was bustin' with all she felt inside of her, just dropped upon her knees and dragged her Sunday boots off Bid Managhan's feet, that seemed stretched out to her for the purpose. She threw Bid's feet from her when she was done with them, and snatched her beautiful Cassimeer off her shoulders, and then stood her up, and made her drop off the skirt. She stooped over Bid while the poor woman, with hands that shook like a mill-hopper, gave her own old brogues a hasty fastenin' upon her, and drew her own old shawl over her shoulders, and then, "Go," says she, pointin' to the door—"Go, Bid Managhan, and don't let the evil shadow of you darken my threshel again for a month o' Sundays."

But poor Bid needed little encouragement to go. She took the door as speedy as she could, and, a crestfallen woman, she went on her journey again to her Uncle Andy's.

And then, when the widow thought it time to give her attentions to her unworthy son, she turned to open the flood-gates on him. But, *inagh!* there was no Barney Brian there; for when he got the two women engaged with each other, he thought

it a good opportunity to go out by the back-door and look at the weather.

But the weather must 'a' been a long way off that day; bekase it was two days and two nights afore he come in again.

And, 't was a while longer afore Bid Managhan come again.

III

THE CADGER-BOY'S LAST JOURNEY

HIS poor mother, after blessing herself with the little brass cross upon her beads, arose from her knees and took again her customary seat by Hughie's bedside. Hughie, who had been lying in a state of obliviousness rather than sleep, had his faculties recalled even by the very little noise his mother's motion made. Her gaze was bent upon her lap, where her hands, still holding the beads, lay limply. For several minutes Hughie watched her, noting the worn look which had asserted itself on her features.

"Mother!" Hughie said at length.

His mother started. "Hughie, *a leanbh,** sure I thought it was sleepin' ye were. What is it ye want, *a theagair?*"†

"Mother, what time is it in the night?"

"It's atween an hour an' two hours after midnight, son."

* O child, pron. *à lanniv.*

† O treasure, pron. *à haigur.*

"Mother," Hughie said, "the heart o' ye is bruck with this weary sittin' up with me every night——"

"Arrah, Hughie, Hughie!" his mother said, upbraidingly, "what is it ye're sayin'! Whisht with ye!"

"Och, I know it, mother—I know it. If ye hadn't a holy saint's patience, an' God's helpin' hand, ye'd ha' given in long ago."

"What's come over ye, Hughie, to be givin' such nonsense out of ye? Sure, it's not want to put pain on me ye do, is it?"

"What day i' the week's this, tell me, mother?"

"This? It's Friday night."

"Friday night. An' it was on a Monday evenin' I lay down. Mother, was it nine weeks or ten last Monday evenin'? I'm beginnin' to lose count i' the weeks lately meself."

"Och, I don't know, Hughie. Sure, that's all God's will, dear."

"I know it's God's will, mother—an' God's will be done—I b'leeve it's ten weeks; an' if it was His will that it should be ten times ten weeks, I could bear the sickness. But then, the sickness i' the body is nothin'—nothin' at all—to the soreness i' the heart. An' it's *you* has to bear that. That's what puts worst on me, mother dear."

"Do ye want to put pain on me, Hughie?"

"Och, mother, don't be talkin' that way. Sure I know, an' I can't help knowin', the pains on ye. Ye're as brave a mother—there's no denyin'—as ever was; but let the bravest i' them come through all you come through for the ten weeks gone, an' suffer all you suffered, an' never for all that time stretch themselves six times upon a bed—let the bravest i' the mothers do that, an' see what heart they'll have at the end of it."

"Och, Hughie, Hughie, *a mhic!** I can't stand ye at all, at all. You mane to br'ak me patience now, at any rate."

"No, mother, I don't. But if I didn't say much all the time I've been lyin' on me back here, I was thinkin'—thinkin' a great dale. An' when I go, mother—Och, don't, mother! Mother, dear, don't go for to cry like that, or ye'll trouble me sore! Sure ye know yourself I must go. Didn't Father Mick tell us both it was God's will, an' be reconciled to it? An' didn't you yourself give in that ye were reconciled to it? An' surely I have a good right to be if you are. Mother, when I go I'll have with me the knowledge of the brave woman ye were, an' of all ye strove with an' suffered, an' of how ye did your seven bests to let no wan see the troubles the heart of ye was comin'

* O son.

through. I'll carry that knowledge to heaven with me, mother dear."

His mother could not answer him, for she was striving hard with the tide of grief which swelled in her bosom and struggled for outlet.

Little Hughie was, to-night, possessed of an exceptionally talkative mood.

"If ye struggle on, with God's help, mother, for another year, wee Donal, he'll be able an' strong an' wise enough then to go on the road."

Little Donal was then lying at Hughie's back, between him and the wall, and sleeping peacefully.

"Wee Donal 'll then be able to take the road with the powny an' cart; an 'wee Donal 'll be as good a son, an' better, to ye, mother, than ever I was—Though, I never kep' any money I could help, mother, barrin' (as I toul' ye the other night —an' as I confessed to Father Mick)—barrin' three ha'pence for tibacky, days I got good sale for the fish. But I couldn't do without the tibacky, mother, wanst I give myself the bad habit. Och, mother, if you would only know lonely nights that I'd be thravelin' *dhreich** an' lonely roads, an' me, too, hungrier than I'd wish—if you would only know the comfort an' the company the tibacky was to me, I know ye'd forgive me, keepin'

* Dreary.

an odd wee three ha'pence for it. Now wouldn't ye, mother?"

"Och, Hughie! Och, Hughie!"

"I just knew the kindly heart i' ye couldn't do else than forgive me. But I know, too, I should have always axed your laive afore I started out on me journey—axed your laive to let me buy the tibacky for meself. But ye ever were so dead again' us smokin' that I was always the coward to ax ye.

"An', ay, many's the long an' many's the *dhreich* journey, mother, me an' the powny had with our wee cart i' fish. An', thank God, many's the pleasant journey, too—far, far more of that sort than of the *dhreich* wans. I mind me many's the lovely moonlight night when we traveled along the white mountain road goin' through to Pettigo, or goin' up to Enniskillen an' to Cavan. An' where there'd be miles an' miles of that road through the Pettigo mountains where there wasn't a house or a hut, or you wouldn't meet a sinner in broad day, let alone i' the night, I used not to have wan bit fear, mother. You always shook the holy water on me when I had me cap lifted, blissin' meself afore I left the doore without; an' then, when that time i' night come that I thought yous was sayin' the Rosary here at home, an' I'd have got on me good lonely part i' the road, I'd

take me cap in me han' an' I'd say me own wee prayers as me an' the powny jogged on: an' after that I'd know no fear, howsomiver lonesome it might be. An', och, mother, the lonesomeness, in the middle i' the mountains on a clear moonlight night, had somethin' gran' about it."

"Hughie, *a thaisge,** I hope ye're not disthressin' yourself talkin'," his mother said, laying a gentle hand on his forehead.

"Oh no, mother! Oh no, mother! It does me good to think over them things now, an' have you listenin' to me. But then, mother dear, maybe it's too tired to listen ye are?"

"Oh no, Hughie; no, Hughie *a mhic.* Tell on —I'd never be tired listenin' to ye."

"Thanky, mother. Och, mother, many an' many's the beautiful journey I had with me wee cart i' fish, if I only begun to tell ye them—settin' off here afore nightfall, an' thravelin' all night, an' bein' in Strabane market or maybe Enniskillen market, next day, an sellin' out me wee load, an' maybe clearin' ten or twelve or maybe sometimes fifteen shillin's, an' then, afther a good rest an' a good hearty male, not forgettin' poor Johnnie, startin' to thravel back for home the nixt night again, with me gains in me pocket—as happy as

* O store.

the son of a prence; an' havin' an odd wee sleep in the bed i' the cart, too."

"Och, Hughie, it was gran' surely, an' no mistake."

"Ah, gran' was no name for it, mother! An' then, too, at the boats—when they came in, the men always give me such bargains, bekase of whose son I was."

"They did, *a mhic.* They did, Hughie, *a thaisge.* God bliss them, an' reward them."

"God bliss them over again, an' reward them. mother. They couldn't be kinder to me. An' I often thought it was better, afther all, that ye wouldn't let me join a boat meself, mother."

"No, no, Hughie, *a gradh!* No, I wouldn't. Not after your poor father, *a gradh!* No, no! God rest him!"

"God rest him, mother! God rest him! An' small wonder you wouldn't let wan belongin' to ye go upon the sae again. It's a cruel, treacherous sae, mother, God knows! Mother dear, don't cry. What's done can't be undone."

"Ay, ay, Hughie. Ay, a cruel treacherous sae. But, for all that, we can't say much again' it, Hughie—we can't say much again' it. Where would we, an' where would all our neighbors be, but for it?"

"That's right, mother. That's right. That's

what I've always sayed when I heerd them complainin' again' it, that, like you, lost their nearest an' dearest be it. It's ill our comin'* to say a hard word again' the sae.—Mother, open the doore."

"For what, *a leanhb?* Are you too warm, *a paisdin?*"†

"No; but I want to see the sae, an' to hear it. There's a moon, isn't there?"

"Yis, Hughie dear; there's a moon, an' a bright wan, thank God," his mother said, going to the door and opening it wide.

"Mother, are ye too tired to rise me up a wee thrifle in the bed, an' let me head rest in your lap, till I see out?"

"Tired? No, no, Hughie. No, no. Aisy, *a mhic*—gently now. Don't sthress yourself, *a phaisdin mhilis*. There now, there now, lay your head there. Now can ye see the sae away below thonder (yonder)."

"Yis, yis, mother, thank God. I see it—I see it. The yalla moonlight baitin' down on it has it like flowin' goold. Oh, mother, it's beautiful!"

"It is beautiful, *a theagair*—beautiful!"

The Widow Cannon's house was far up on the

* It ill becomes us.
† O child.

Ardaghey hillside, and the sea out at Inver bar and beyond was plainly visible through the door from the corner in which was placed Hughie's bed. A muffled music, too, could be heard ascending from the bar.

Hughie lay quietly gazing, gazing.

After a while two yawls were plainly seen far out darting athwart the yellow path which the moon laid along the waters.

"The boats," Hughie said, "are aff,* mother, thi' night."

"Yis, Hughie; they're aff."

Then Hughie again relapsed into silence, watching and thinking. A smile of sweet content, his mother saw with gladness, gradually grew upon his countenance and played about his glistening eyes. And presently, to the sweet murmur of the bar, his eyes closed, and he slept.

The Widow Cannon stirred not one little bit, lest she should disturb the poor boy's slumber—his first for many days and nights. But her lips began to move again in prayer, and a disengaged hand to tell the beads. Occasionally her eyes were turned up to heaven, but mostly they rested upon the now placid, smiling countenance of her poor boy, who slept on.

* Off; *i. e.*, at the fishing grounds.

"Mother?"

"Yis, *a mhilis?** Is it awake ye are?"

"Why, was it sleepin' I was, mother dear?"

"Ay, sleepin', *a mhic dhilis.* A sweet sleep."

"There ye are—an' I thinkin' I went through it all."

"What, darlin'? Was it dhraimin' ye were?"

"Ay, dhraimin' I suppose it must 'a' been. But I thought—Mother!"

"What is it now, *a mhic?*"

"Who's callin'?"

"I hear no wan callin', Hughie dear."

"Listen! Don't ye hear? Hear to that! Who's that? What's that?"

"That? Oh, that's the bar, Hughie dear—that's only the bar ye hear."

"Is it the bar?—Well, mother, as I was sayin', I thought I had got up an' fed Johnnie, an' then pulled out the rakin's i' the fire, an' made myself a drop i' tay in the porringer, an' then harnesshed Johnnie, an' yocked him, an' away with the both of us away to the sthran', to see if the boats was in. An' when we got to the sthran' there wasn't a boat in yet, nor there wasn't a cadger come upon the sthran' with powny or donkey. An' then I saw it was the moon was shinin' bright upon the waters, makin' it look near like day. There was

* My sweet.

the big white sthran' sthretchin' from me to the right an' to the left, with niver another sowl on it but meself an' Johnnie, the powny. An' the Inver Warren over beyont me; an' the Fanaghan banks risin' up black behin' me, an' the full tide washin' in an' br'akin in wee ripples that had a dhreamy, sing-song sound, at me feet. An' then, far, far away, away out on the wather, I could see the yawls an' the boats hard at the fishin'. An' all at wanst, mother, while I was lookin', what does I see but wan particular boat comin' glidin' in swift, straight along the sort of yalla river that the moon made from where the waters an' the skies met, right up to my feet; in along this goolden river I sees the boat comin' faster an' faster, far faster than any of the boats ever does; an' it was comin' rowin' right up tor'st where I was. I seen there was a lady all in white in the bow i' the boat, an' when it come near she was standin' up an' callin' me with her finger. An' she looked iver such a beautiful lady, mother, when they come nearer still. An' when they did come nearer, into within wadin' distance, an' they turned the boat roun' so that they faced me, an' shipped their oars, I knew every wan was in the boat. An', mother dear, who was it but me father was at the helm! me father himself! An' James an' Patrick Magroarty was on the after oars! an' Feargal

McCue on the second bow! Just the very four, mother, that went down in me father's boat. An' Micky Dinnien, that got saved, his oar it was lyin' along the thafts with no wan to pull it!

"But the most curious part of the thing, mother, was that I wasn't wan bit surprised to see them. Lookin' at them there, I knew right well—minded right well—that they were drownded; but, all the same, I somehow thought they were still alive —ye know, mother, how draims does go that way?"

"Yis, Hughie; yis, Hughie. O God rest their souls, Hughie!"

"God rest them, mother. Well, as I sayed, when the boat come as far as to be near groundin', they swung her round, be Feargal McCue *shewin'* on his oar. An' then me father, he rises from the helm, an' he says, 'Hughie,' says he, 'we're short of a han' since we lost Micky Dinnien' (him was saved, mind you, mother)—'short of a han',' says he, 'since we lost Micky Dinnien,' an'—Mother, do ye hear?"

"What! what! *a stoir, mo chroidhe?** What is it?"

"Who's that callin', mother? Listen! Now —hear it now!"

"Hughie, Hughie, *a thaisge,* that's the bar ye

* Treasure of my heart.

hear again. The noise is risin' an' fallin', as ye know it always does. That's the bar, *a phaisdin.*"

"Is it the bar, mother? It sounds to me very like some wan callin'—very. Well, mother, as I was tellin' ye, me father he says, 'We're short of a han' since we lost Micky Dinnien, and we can come but poor speed on the fishin' grounds. We seen you, Hughie, come down with the powny to the sthran', an' we rowed in, to take ye aboord. Will ye step in like a good chile, Hughie, and pull on the bow oar for us?' But I minded, mother, how you promised, an' made me promise, I'd never take to the fishin' after what happened; so I had to refuse him. 'Father,' says I, 'I'd like to do as ye ax me, an' take the bow oar, but I can't—I can't. Ye know,' says I, 'how me poor mother's so dead again' my ever goin' in wan i' the boats; and ye know her poor oul heart it's nigh bruck already; an' I'll never have it sayed that *I* was the manes of br'akin' it out an' out'. 'An' God bliss ye, me son, for mindin' your poor mother's wishes so,' says me father back again.

"An' with that, mother, who should appear but yourself up on the bank above me, an' ye called down to me: 'Go with your father, Hughie—go with your poor father.' I was ever so glad when I got your laive to go, for I was burning to go. I threw me arms roun' Johnnie's neck, an' I called

to ye, 'Mother, come you down an' take Johnnie home, an' don't forget him while me an' me father's aff.' The white lady she was standin' up in the bow of the boat now, and she was wavin' her hands to me to come. 'Come, Hughie,' she calls; 'come, wee Hughie! the tide's laivin', and we'll get sthranded when we should be on the fishin' grounds.'

"I waded into the water immediately an' out to the boat—and I was just almost beside the boat —within a step of it or two, an' the beautiful white lady had her hands stretched out, to give me a help in over the bows, an' I was stretchin' out my hands tor'st her, when there come a smooth swell that shook an' staggered me where I stood, an' I thought I'd a' fallen backwards— but the white lady at that stretched out further to help me—when I wakened!

"Mother, wasn't that or not a wonderful dhraim?"

"Yis; wonderful it was, Hughie—mighty wonderful, me poor fella. It was a very strange, oncommon dhraim. An' Micky Dinnien's oar, too, was idle! And they sayin' they'd lost Micky!"

"That was the very thing, mother, I thought strangest of all."

"Hughie, we'll say a Pather-an'-Ave for the

rest of your father's soul, an' the souls of the crew."

"Yis, mother, do."

Then the widow slowly intoned the "Our Father," and Hughie took it up fervently at "Give us this day," and the widow poured forth her soul in the "Hail Mary! full of grace," while wasted, emaciated Hughie clasped his hands and with streaming eyes strenuously pleaded a "Holy Mary, Mother of God;" and both then chorused joyously: *"Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. Amen!"*

"Mother," said Hughie, "I'll sleep."

"Sleep then, *a chuisle mo chroidhe,** sleep—Thank God!" said his mother.

Ere she had finished the sentence Hughie's eyes had closed, and he was again asleep. She still held in her lap his head, as she had done now for upward of two hours. She bent down and left a faint kiss on his white brow.

"Mother, is that you, there?"

"Yis, Hughie, *a leanbh.* Are ye aisy?"

"Mother, what are ye doin' there? Who's callin', mother?"

"I'm only aisin' your head, Hughie—holdin' it

* Pulse of my heart.

up—an' restin' meself sittin' here.—There's no wan callin', Hughie. That's the bar, ye hear."

"Oh, but there's some wan callin'—callin' me, mother. Listen to it!" Hughie's voice was very low.

"Hughie, *a mhilis,* no. It's the bar. Sure your own mother knows."

"Is it near mornin', mother? What time is it?"

"It's near mornin', Hughie. The first streaks is on the sky."

"The first streaks on the sky, an' me lyin' here! an' the boats in! Mother, what day's this? What's come over me, anyhow, that I've lost the memory o' what day it is?"

"This is Monday mornin', Hughie, *a thaisge."*

"An' the morra's market-day in Enniskillen—isn't it, mother?"

"I suppose so, Hughie, I suppose so. But, *a thaisge,* don't, don't be distressin' yourself about them things."

"Och, mother, mother, it's not here I should be lyin', at this time i' the mornin'—an' I havin' to go buy me load yet, an' be as far as Pettigo afore nightfall, an' be goin' up Enniskillen street with the first light the morra mornin'—Mother, mother, let me up.—Put me on a dhrop i' tay, an' butter me a bit of oat-cake, an' I'll give a grain

i' corn to poor Johnnie.—Mother, why don't ye let me up, I say? The boats is in two hours ago. Look out. There isn't a sign i' wan of them on the water!"

"Whisht, whisht! Oh, Hughie, *a thaisge,* whisht an' lie quiet. Don't ye know, *a gradh,* ye're *far through* with the sickness? Oh, Hughie, *a phaisdin,* whisht, whisht with ye!"

"Mother, I must be on the market pavement of Enniskillen this time the morra mornin'. Mother, why will ye hould me, an' you hearin' them callin'? Don't ye hear, mother? Don't ye hear? *'Hughie!* HUGHIE! HUGHIE!' Don't ye hear them, mother?"

"Och, Hughie i' me heart, lie down quiet. Or what's comin' over ye, Hughie?—No, no, Hughie! ye mustn't, ye can't go for to rise, *a leanbh!"*

"Hear to them, mother! Hear to them! *'Hughie!* HUGHIE! HUGHIE!' Don't ye hear? —AY! AY!—Och, call you from the doore for me, mother—call you, mother dear, for my voice'll not let me call loud, whatever's come on it. Call 'Ay!' mother, an' tell them I'm comin' as soon as poor Johnnie's fed."

"Yis, Hughie, *a thaisge,* yis. If you lie quiet I'll call to them."

"Mother, what do ye mane? Lie quiet!—an'

the boats in!—an' the light on the sky—an' me havin' to be goin' up Enniskillen sthreet this time the morra mornin', mother!—forty long mile, an' a tiresome journey for poor Johnnie. It's a long journey, mother, but—I—must——"

His poor mother had to force Hughie back upon the bed. It didn't take much force, indeed. Then he became quiet, suddenly. The look of anxiety and unrest slowly passed from his features. His two hands closed in a faster clasp upon one hand of his mother, which in the struggle he had caught. A smile of sweet peace settled upon his white, wasted face, and the cadger-boy started upon his last journey.

IV

THE MINISTER'S RACEHORSE

PRESBYTERIAN though he was—and Presbyterian minister at that—there was not a more widely beloved man at Knockagar than Mr. M'Cracken, barrin', of course, Father Dan himself. But that goes without saying.

From Pat the Public to Johnny the Post the good old soul was beloved of all. "All creeds admired him," as Pat Moroney put it in *The Drimstevlin Universe,* "and all classes esteemed."

It was apropos of his apprehended departure from Knockagar, where he had diligently devoted all the years of his prime alike to the spiritual and temporal care of his small, humble, and widely distributed flock, that Pat wrote. For, after his long and arduous years of labor at Knockagar, it was said he was about to reap his reward, and be called to end his days in tranquillity and ease in the ministry of the wealthy and well-to-do Presbyterian parish of Largymore. The minister of Largymore had just been slipped under the

sod; and, casting about for a becoming successor, the elders of that parish, acting upon strong representations laid before them, were inclined to extend to Mr. M'Cracken, in the distant country of Knockagar, a unanimous call to the office.

When this startling news—which surprised Mr. M'Cracken as much as it did his humblest parishioner—ran like wildfire through Knockagar, there was mingled joy and grief in the hearts of all, including alike that of Mr. M'Cracken and that of Micky M'Granahan, the atheist, who broke stones at the cross-roads on weekdays, and, with other reprobates, played cards for buttons, at the back of Tom Hegarty's march-ditch on Sundays.

There was deep joy in their breasts, inasmuch as even the very dogs of the parish had come to love Mr. M'Cracken. Such a stroke of good luck for him in his old days warmed the cockles of their hearts; but there was deep grief at the thought of losing him. And the idea of going away to rich and well-to-do Largymore, leaving his poor and scattered flock to be cared for by, perhaps, some hard and unsympathetic stranger, who, though he would live a lifetime among them, might never penetrate to the milky kernel of kindness that was so well concealed beneath their hard outer shell, wrung the heart of the good old man

himself. But as they knew, and as he knew, that old age had surely overtaken him, and that he was becoming unfitted to do the work of such a large and scattered parish as conscientiously as only he could do it, both Mr. M'Cracken and his flock had to concede to themselves that the proposed call to Largymore was probably God-directed. Then, accepting it in this spirit, he and his sorrow-stricken congregation bowed their heads.

When the word passed—as, very soon after, it did—that two elders from Largymore were appointed to come and see Mr. M'Cracken and his parish, to interview him and hear him preach, his parishioners and friends at once donned their pride. They put their heads together, and said that their faithful old minister must have—what he never owned in his life before—a horse and trap that would be a credit to him, and a credit to the parish, a conveyance in which to drive the Largymore elders around, and which to carry off with him to Largymore for his own future ease and comfort, and for the keeping of poor Knockagar and its people green in his memory.

Mr. M'Cracken, who had never in his life before aspired to a four-footed beast or a wheel conveyance, ever traveling the tedious length and breadth of his parish on foot—as the Master, whom he aspired to imitate, traveled—was over-

whelmed by such generous desire on the part of his poor parishioners. He emphatically protested that, both for their sakes and his own sake, he could not dream of accepting such a present at their hands.

His protest, however, was unconcernedly ignored. They had made up their minds that he should have a horse and trap—and a horse and trap, so, he must have. He besought, entreated, and remonstrated. But his entreaties and remonstrances were brushed aside and disregarded.

The poor of the parish—which is to say, all of the parish, for in Knockagar they were only rich in God's blessing—Catholic, Protestant, Methodist, and Presbyterian, had, in public meeting assembled—in Matthew M'Court's barn—demanded that the best horse and trap which money could buy in the parish should without delay be placed at the disposal of the departing pastor. And Pat the Public, who possessed a retired racer —which he had bought-in for the purpose of delivering his porter and other liquid commodities at the public-houses of the country—magnanimously made offer of his horse—which was considered the glory of the parish, although it was "over in the knees"—at the same money for which he had purchased it; and his trap, which was a new one, at first cost also, less three half-crowns to be de-

ducted as his own subscription—all as a token of the whole-souled esteem and admiration which he entertained for Mr. M'Cracken, although the latter's opinions, both on theological and temperance questions, diverged from the opinions of the said Pat as far as opinions could diverge.

Now, although Mr. M'Cracken had a red nose, which was a veritable *ignis fatuus* to strangers, he was the most sincere and the most staunch upholder of teetotalism, in practice not less than precept, that Knockagar had ever known; and as Pat the Public—so called because he kept the chief public-house in all that part of the country—supported himself and his family by dispensing—wholesale to the smaller public-houses of the country, and retail to everyone who asked for it—that liquor which Mr. M'Cracken was all his life discountenancing, Pat's magnanimity was signal; and it was infectious, too, for everyone vied with the other, and Catholic vied with Presbyterian, Methodist with Protestant, in there and then subscribing all that their slender means would permit them—and more—and taking over, in Mr. M'Cracken's name, the ownership of Pat the Public's retired racer—by himself trained upon the road for the past three years—and Pat's new trap.

Then they coerced their beloved pastor into

assuming the ownership of an animal which, through eyes misty with gratitude, still seemed to him rather a white elephant than a chestnut horse.

"The Largymore people," Pat proclaimed, when the present was being made, "must not be given to understand, to our shame, that we have left this poor old man to trudge through mud and mire all the days of his life till now, without having a horse and trap of his own. They must carry away with them the impression that Mr. M'Cracken and this horse and trap grew up together, and have been bosom companions as long as man and his mother minds."

And with all their hearts the huzzaing crowd approved of this grand sentiment. It was in vain for poor Mr. M'Cracken to remonstrate, and point out that this would be untruthful. Pat asked him to make his mind easy on that point.

"You, Mr. M'Cracken," Pat said, "will be asked to tell no untruth—because it would be again' your trade. And you must understand that, in the creelfuls of sins every man in this multitude carries on his conscience, a lie more or less will make small differ; for it is like when the herrings are plenty—the wee ones are always thrown in without being reckoned in the count."

Mr. M'Cracken's conscience stung him to further remonstrance; but for once the voice of Pat

the Public carried more weight with the parish of Knockagar than did that of their well-loved pastor.

"To perfect him in the art of handling Pittolemy"—he called the racer Ptolemy—"I will devote the next three days to teaching Mr. M'Cracken," Pat informed his neighbors. And since Mr. M'Cracken must use the animal now that he had taken it, he consented to place himself under Pat's tuition.

Pat took him, with the horse and trap, to an out-of-the-way mountain road, and taught him the art of trotting, galloping, and walking, impressing upon him the fact that he was never to let a horse pass him, or the old instinct would be aroused in the racer, and he couldn't hold him in after. And Mr. M'Cracken, getting alarmed upon this point, had his fears quieted again, he being assured that there wasn't a horse in the parish would attempt to pass Pittolemy, barrin' Andy M'Golrick's pony, of Altnamard. For Andy and his pony were the only ill-mannered pair in the parish, the bad manners consisting—in Pat's eyes —of Andy and his pony persisting for the past twelve months "in having the impertinence to think" that they were fit to outrun himself and Pittolemy.

An apt pupil, and a properly qualified driver,

Pat pronounced Mr. M'Cracken when he handed him over the reins of office on the Saturday night preceding the coming of the elders.

"There's no reason in the wide world," Pat said to him, "why the Largymore men needn't think but you have been driving this horse and trap since the day after you left the cradle. If you give them to understand otherwise," Pat asserted, "I will be sorry, Mr. M'Cracken; but I will have to strike your name off my list of friends." And the large crowd of neighbors who were assembled around Pat and Mr. M'Cracken emphatically approved of Pat's remarks. "We ask you to tell no lie," said Pat, "for it would be unseemly in a man of your business. I only ask you to keep your mouth shut; and the Bible never yet was printed that makes out to be a lie what a man never said."

It was quite useless for poor Mr. M'Cracken to try to alter this, the popular opinion, for the subtleties of theology were quite lost upon Pat and his friends.

The Largymore elders arrived that very night; and so searching and so insistent were the eyes of these grave men that Mr. M'Cracken was quickly placed in the predicament of having to volunteer the explanation of his red nose, an explanation

with which they deigned to appear satisfied. Next day in church they sat through the service and through the sermon, maintaining that ostentatiously severe aspect which can be successfully affected only by those whose salvation is already secured, and who know it.

Their aggressive spiritual superiority awakened the profound sympathy of all his hearers for poor, humble Mr. M'Cracken. And he needed it, for indeed he was unnerved in endeavoring in his own humble way to interpret the Word in the presence of those to whom the great Bible mysteries were as plain as the multiplication-table.

Yet, by God's help and the whole-souled sympathy of his hearers, he struggled through service and sermon with some credit, even if not with unqualified success, so that the two elders from Largymore condescended to bow their heads in token of approval.

Mr. M'Cracken and his whole congregation drew a long breath of relief.

Yet, his call to Largymore being thus assured, now more than ever was he in a state of fearful trepidation, for he felt certain that he was not a God-fearing enough, pious enough, spiritual enough man to minister to such exalted souls; but still he remembered the Biblical injunction, and

looked not back, having put his hand to the plow.

Early on Monday morning, to go the rounds of his great parish, Ptolemy and the trap were drawn out, and Mr. M'Cracken, with the two elders, took their seats, while an earnest gathering of Mr. M'Cracken's friends stood around; and Pat the Public, holding the animal by the bridle and affectionately patting his neck, informed the grave gentlemen from Largymore, to Mr. M'Cracken's manifest uneasiness—for he wriggled in his seat —that this was the finest horse ever stood in Mr. M'Cracken's stable; that the minister hadn't owned him for quite seven years yet (it was in thoughtful consideration of Mr. M'Cracken's conscience that Pat deigned to put his lie in this truthful form), and that he would not part with him for gold.

He warned them that they would find Mr. M'Cracken "a dandy man behind a horse. But then," Pat added, "the divil thank him for that." (Mr. M'Cracken squirmed, and the elders looked grave at Pat's enormity.) The all-unconscious Pat repeated: "Divil thank him, says I; for if any of us had the same experience of him, or even one half of it, and had as good a horse for so long, we would deserve to be tarred and feathered if

we didn't know how to make him laive the road behind him."

Mr. M'Cracken was struggling to dissociate himself from Pat's falsehoods. Pat had anticipated this, and was prepared; so, without giving him another moment, he said, "Head off, Pittolemy!" And he thrust the reins, and the responsibility of the horse and trap and elders, upon the poor minister, effectively shutting off his disclaimers, as he well knew it should; for Ptolemy stretched himself to the road with a will, and immediately all of Mr. M'Cracken's concentration of mind was requisitioned for the very serious business on hand.

Ptolemy trotted along at a spanking pace that delighted the elders, who, unworldly as they might be, still knew how to appreciate a clean piece of horseflesh; and in turn that even delighted Mr. M'Cracken himself. Quickly and smoothly he went up hill and down dale—needing no whip and little reins—till, after having run for a mile and a half, the animal suddenly drew in, despite great efforts to the contrary of Mr. M'Cracken—drew in, and pulled up by a large thatched wayside shop —drew up with a sudden jerk that almost shot the elders from the trap. When they recovered themselves they read the sign, the legend upon which ran:

"Peter John Maguire,
Licensed to sell whisky, wines, and beer for consumption on the premises.
Licensed not to sell on Sundays."

In some little consternation they said:

"Mr. M'Cracken, is this one of your hearers?"

Mr. M'Cracken, as he still pulled and tugged at Ptolemy to get him to depart, replied, in some confusion:

"Oh, no, no!"

Peter John Maguire, meantime, had run out in his shirt-sleeves and welcomed Mr. M'Cracken, and was entreating himself and his friends to come in and have the best that his house could afford. The elders repaid poor Peter John's kindness with their very severest look, and Mr. M'Cracken appealed to him to do him the kindness of leading the horse out and setting him on the road again, which, after much vain remonstrance, Peter John did, and Ptolemy and his load were off once more. But on the trap there was maintained a silence that struck a chill to poor Mr. M'Cracken's heart.

It was only with a great deal of forceful persuasion that Mr. M'Cracken could induce the animal to pause when at length they did reach the

house of a genuine hearer. But the next time that Ptolemy stopped he did so, not merely unsolicited, but again very much against Mr. M'Cracken's will and power of arm. The elders, to their shocked surprise, discovered that he had again pulled up at a country shop, the sign upon which read:

"Barney Dunnion,

Licensed for the sale of wine, spirits, beer, and tobacco, to be consumed on the premises. Licensed to sell on Sundays."

The proprietor was out, and was clothed in welcoming smiles at the sight of good old Mr. M'Cracken, and was as pressing in kind offers of hospitality as had been Peter John Maguire some distance back. But Mr. M'Cracken, far from accepting the offer, was in a fever to get off. He induced Barney to aid him by leading forth the horse, which service Barney at length did. But when Barney, having headed him upon the road, again let go his hold of the bridle, Ptolemy looked back, disappointed, over his shoulder before he resumed his trot again.

The elders only coughed. Mr. M'Cracken perspired; and from mental tension the veins on the good man's forehead stood out. In due course

the horse volunteered a halt, once more, at a house where the sign read:

"Laurence P. Gaffikin,

Licensed for the sale of spirituous liquors, wine, ale, or tobacco, to be consumed on or off the premises. Licensed to sell on weekdays and on Sundays."

When the elders had put up their glasses and read this sign, they then looked over the glasses at each other.

"Ahem!" they remarked.

And it was only through the united efforts of Mr. M'Cracken and Laurence P. that Ptolemy was seduced upon the road once more.

The perspiration was standing upon the brow of Mr. M'Cracken when he took the road again. He had now all the powers of his mind bent upon the animal. He passed many of the houses of his chief hearers, absolutely forgetting their existence. When he came in the neighborhood of another public-house his nervousness was intensified, and with all his might and main he strove to win past on the off-side of the road; but, lightly disregarding his striving, Ptolemy wheeled in, and pulled up at the publican's door. Whether the liquor, in this case, was to be consumed on or off

the premises, and whether on a Sunday or a week-day, the elders were too much overcome to observe; they simply glanced at the sign, and then, chorusing a groan, lay back on their seats, with bowed heads, while Mr. M'Cracken and the publican sorely strove and argued with Ptolemy again.

Mr. M'Cracken breathed a prayer of gratitude when at length he had Ptolemy upon the home-run with not more than two public houses between him and his journey's end; and he was getting along smoothly, and feeling that he might soon have time and nerve to explain matters to the speechless ones who now sat by his side, when, as ill-luck would have it, out from a by-road dashed a pony and trap, which, turning, sped on ahead of them at a spanking pace. And at that moment Ptolemy threw back his head and set his ears, and went off like a shot. The man driving the first car looked round. It was Andy M'Golrick of Altnamard, driving his pony, the only surviving rival of Pat the Public's Ptolemy.

The elders, who for a long time past had maintained a painful silence, now for the first time spoke, begging of Mr. M'Cracken, for all sakes, to hold in his animal; but Mr. M'Cracken was powerless even to answer them. The rate had increased so, and the trap had so begun to hop

and bound, that Mr. M'Cracken, still tightening the rein, was compelled to crouch forward and take firm grip upon the rail in front of him, giving the effect of one who was eagerly throwing all his spirit into the race. To add to the poor man's other woes, a terrific rattle and crashing began in the enclosure under the seat, and then he knew well that Pat the Public had forgotten to remove his "empties" on handing him over the trap.

Faster and faster Andy M'Golrick put his pony to it, and faster and faster still went Mr. M'Cracken with his; and earnestly and more earnestly did the Largymore elders, gripping fast by the readiest holds, now beg and beseech of the minister to desist from such a foolish race, for if he didn't their necks would surely be broken. But poor Mr. M'Cracken heeded them not—it is even doubtful if he heard them. He was holding like grim death himself—holding at once both reins and staying-rail—and his eyes and all his attention seemed fixed far ahead.

The quarrymen galloped down from the Altbeg quarry, and the harvesters and the shearers on the hillside threw down their hooks in the corn, and ran to the road to cheer him on.

"Boul' Mr. M'Cracken," they said. "My brave fellow! Go it—go it! Who'd have thought ye had the pluck in ye? Houl' on to it

like that, an' you'll soon bate the divil out of Andy M'Golrick and his pony!"

Closer and closer upon Andy he had crept, and at length he shouted upon him to clear the way; but to Andy it was mortification enough to be overtaken, without having to yield the road to his rival. He scorned to do it, and obstinately held on to the middle course. Ptolemy overtook him, and would have swept past had not the wheel of the trap and the side of Andy M'Golrick's car collided. There was a breathless instant or two, during which the two vehicles ran upon a grand total of two wheels; and the next instant, with a clatter and a clang, with the despairing cries of the elders, and amid a regular storm of empty bottles, the trap and its occupants were overturned into a plowed field by the roadside.

After a minute, Mr. M'Cracken, from where he lay, summoning up courage to open his eyes, saw his two Largymore friends laid prone amidst scattered liquor-bottles, from the labels of which, despite their evident sufferings, they were spelling out such inscriptions as: "Good old Inishowen," "Magennis's seven-year old Coleraine," and "For all mortal ills, including toothache, try Peter Maguire's special old malt whisky."

Mr. M'Cracken turned over with a groan, closed his eyes, and wished in his heart that he

was closing his eyes for ever more upon this world of ill-luck, woe, and misery.

. . . . . .

As he lay in his bed at home, recovering from the shock (which, after all, was more mental than physical) not the least sincere sympathizer that called was Pat the Public, who cheerfully assured him that he was gladder than a hundred pounds in gold that the minister had overtaken that impident scamp Andy M'Golrick, and taiched him the lesson that he did!

"I was a proud and a happy man, Mr. M'Cracken—an' so should you be—to see you carried home, an' them Largymore men carried away to the country they come from; for you l'arnt Andy M'Golrick a lesson in manners that he'll not forget for a month o' Sundays, and gained the victory for Pittolomey at a dirt-cheap price."

Quickly came the news that Largymore was looking for a minister elsewhere.

Mr. M'Cracken, rejoiced to find that, after all, he was not to leave the people of his heart's love, besought his hearers and friends to sell his horse and trap, and divide the proceeds among the poor of Knockagar.

V

THE CASE OF KITTY KILDEA

FOR all Kitty Kildea hadn't a bonny face (Barney Brian informed the neighbors when he come back from his visit to the States) she had as bonny a heart as was to be found atween Americay's shores—and that was a big word. And (Barney added in a whisper, which expressed at one and the same time secrecy, amusement, and admiration)—Kitty's as proud as Lucifer—she is.

Barney was pretty correct in his estimate. Kitty's share of physical beauty, sure enough, was emphasized by its absence. She was short and bunty, and walked with a waddle. Her face was dried and wrinkled—as, indeed, it might well be, for, as Micky Malloy remarked when Barney told them of her, "She's wore that face as long as I mind"; and the neighbors unanimously agreed that Micky minded fifty-five years, if he minded a day. Moreover, Kitty's left eye had a particularly comical squint, which looked so out of place in a countenance so grave and so

sedate that it often prompted a casual acquaintance to laugh—a casual acquaintance. Kitty's bonnet and dress, too, were maybe a bit odd and old-fashioned; they were always black, but she tried to enliven them with one or two fantastic ribbons that almost completed the uniform oddity of Kitty Kildea. Almost; for it was never really completed till she adopted her umbrella, and sallied down Fifth Avenue. This umbrella had been venerable a decade before; it was bundled and bound with a long black boot-lace, whose ends waved about in a manner that no other mortal but Kitty could contrive, and carried in a fashion that no other save Kitty Kildea could carry it; and, storm or shine, rain, hail or snow, the umbrella and Kitty were such inseparable out-of-door companions that she would as readily have dreamt of going down Fifth Avenue barefooted as empty-handed.

And when Kitty Kildea—with the umbrella—did walk down Fifth Avenue, there was no higher head (morally speaking) in all of the parading throng.

It's true that her youth had slipped away from Kitty, and her (very modest) show of beauty; but there was one quality that never did and never could desert her—that was her indomitably proud spirit. She looked upon Kitty Kildea as the equal

of any woman or man outside Ireland. And, without being too strikingly ostentatious on the point, she could make anyone whose presumption earned for them the reminder, instantly feel it in the atmosphere.

Strangely enough, it was this very quality of poor Kitty's that suddenly wrought her downfall. For, after having borne on her shoulders for thirty-three years—ever since her second year in the States—the cares of the house of the old bachelor, Aaron Boult, she, as well as all the world, got a shock when he suddenly introduced a young wife, and set her over Kitty's head. And as Kitty was no way partial to the giddy mistress, neither was she partial to the tribe and type of men that then began to make her—Kitty's—house their resort. And when at length she was, against her will, driven into giving this young woman a deserved and dignified snub in the presence of the bunch of the men referred to, Aaron Boult, excited and angered at her by the tears of the young woman (with whom he was infatuated), had spoken angrily to Kitty Kildea—for the first time in three-and-thirty years—and with stern words and a hard face had given her a dismissal from his services. Stern words he certainly spoke, and a hard face he showed, though Jenny, who had been Kitty's subordinate, was able

to tell that after Kitty had said to him a cold but dignified "Good-bye" and, in the wake of a bonnet-box and a pathetic-looking tin case, marched with the dignity of a queen out of the house where she had for three-and-thirty years made him a true home, he broke down and cried like a baby.

Kitty had mighty little left of the world's wealth—by reason of her two glaring faults, an open heart and an open hand. And no boy or girl from Home, when misfortune overtook them, ever wanted while Kitty had it. Five score of grateful friends, now, when they heard of Kitty's misfortune, threw open both their doors and their purses to her. That she had such loyal friends made Kitty's soul glad, but her pride would not permit her to take advantage of any such offers. She just shook the venerable umbrella at them and waddled away to engage her own lodgings.

Now Kitty had a brother, Rodgie, at home in Ireland, who had stayed there and slipped into their father's possessions—for Kitty was above claiming a part—when the old man died.

And some well-meaning ones suggested to Kitty, "Why not go home and spend the rest of your life in the aise ye have earned, in-under Rodgie's roof, who owes ye a deal more than your keep if ye claimed it?" But Kitty scorned the idea. For

Rodgie's mistress was master in that house, and, as she had been a moneyed woman, the daughter of a moneyed man, she had considered poor relations with supreme contempt; and, since Rodgie's sister, Kitty, was a "menial"—so Mrs. Rodgie put it—in America, she had long ago made her husband scratch Kitty's name out of the family records. 'Twas little wonder that poor proud Kitty should revolt at the idea of going home to live in that woman's house then; and that she'd prefer, instead, to face the dire want that now stared her in the face in America.

But Barney Brian had just arrived home from the States; and Barney Brian was one of the very last boys whom poor Kitty had helped before she lost her place. He knew, too—what all the American world knew—that it was Kitty's noble-souled generosity that now left her on the threshold of poverty; and as Barney Brian, good-hearted ne'er-do-well that he was, could not make her any pecuniary return—even if, for a moment, he could dare to think she would take it—he suddenly conceived a brilliant idea, as it appeared to him, for bettering poor Kitty's position.

A brilliant one I suppose it really was, though it was an idea peculiarly after the fashion of Barney's own peculiar morals.

And in furtherance of the idea, on the very

second day after Knockagar had, with acclamation as noisy as it was sincere, received the prodigal into its arms again, and killed the fatted calf (which was in this case a goose), Barney journeyed forth, making Rodgie Kildea's of Altamard his objective. And, having arrived there, he rushed in with all the joyous demonstration he could muster.

"Arrah, Mrs. Kildea, *a mhuirin,*" said he, seizing both her hands and wringing them, "but it's meself's a glad man to see your handsome, kindly face again; for, in troth, few I saw like it since the last tear I dropped outside your door—the night a'fore I left Ireland."

And all this time he retained his firm grip on the hands of Mrs. Kildea, working them up and down like pump handles. To such a surpassing amount of enthusiasm, Mrs. Kildea was forced to be responsive. While she hurried herself in preparing a repast for Barney, she was eager in her inquiries after Barney's health and happiness, and the health and happiness of all the friends he left behind him in the States.

And Barney gave glowing accounts of his friends. "There's Rodgie's sister, Kitty, too," he said, "that ye've forgot about." Mrs. Kildea's figure instantly—Barney was noting with the tail of his eye—stiffened with all the dormant dignity

of her father's daughter. But Barney went on as if he did not dream of anything amiss: "And if there's one from home who is a credit to the country she left it's Kitty; or if there's one who has thriven well, and put a pile together, it's her." Barney did not fail to observe the relaxing process that Mrs. Kildea's figure suddenly underwent. But he gave no sign of noting anything beyond the good things on the table to which he was doing not merely justice but injustice—for, after the seasickness, Barney's appetite was like a razor's edge.

"Three-and-thirty years Kitty sarved the one masther. For the last twinty years he could no more do without her than he could do without the back of his head; and it's shockin', I b'lieve, the wages he was giving her. It's sayed—but meself can't swear whether it's true or not—that the company she was in the habit of bankin' her wages with at last refused to take any more from her for fear she'd break them if she'd suddenly take the notion to withdraw." Mrs. Kildea had pulled a chair close to Barney and was listening open-mouthed. "So," said Barney, "she had to begin puttin' her wages into rale estate. The finest part of it all is," said he, "that Kitty, with all her wealth, is as plain as you or me."

Under other circumstances Mrs. Kildea would

have frozen at this phrase, but she heeded it not now. She was mighty interested in Barney's story.

"As plain," said Barney, "as you, ma'am, or me.—And now, as she consithered she had more money made than she knew what to do with"—Barney's audience was engrossed in his words—"and as the age is fallin' on her fast, she has retired from sarvice and is intendin' to live, in aise and comfort, on the inthrust of her money for the remainder of her natural life; and the Lord only knows what she'll do with her money then." Mrs. Kildea craned her neck forward. "But," Barney said coolly, "it's the opinion that she'll lave it to the Bishop o' Brooklyn (and a'tween you an' me he's keepin' close tack to Kitty) to help him put a belfry on his chapel. And I suppose, afther all, that's about the best use she could put it to," and Barney looked up to Mrs. Kildea for approval.

"Barney Brian," said Mrs. Kildea, straightening herself, "it would ill be Kitty's comin', to fire her little grain of gatherin' into the Bishop's belfry when she has her brother Rodgie in Ireland puttin' the bone through the skin tryin' to maintain his little family in dacency."

"Upon my word," said Barney with alacrity, "and sure it's right ye are. Meself never looked at it in that way."

"I've set me heart on makin' me family respectable," said Mrs. Kildea, "above the common families of the parish. I want to make an attorney of Brian, turn Peter into a doctor, and make a priest of wee Johnnie.—And look," she said, "what a couple of hundred pounds of Kitty Kildea's money would do there! It'll be a black shame for her, and a sin on her soul, if she goes throwin' her lock of money into a belfry and them that, by thickness of blood, she owes it to, losin' their rights for the want of it.—Barney Brian," she said, "am I right?"

"Ma'am," said Barney, pushing from him his cup and saucer, wiping his mouth and crossing himself in thanksgiving, "Ma'am," he said, "you're right, as you always are. It would be a shame, sure enough, for Kitty—a black shame. I seen wee Johnnie, more by the same token, box a clane 'round at the end of the school lane as I come here, and lavin' a pair of as purty black eyes as you'd wish to see with a lad that was double his size. He's a brave chap, good luck to him! an'll make a darlin' fine priest. I wish him his health.—But, as I was sayin', it'll sure enough be a black shame for poor Kitty to forget her own brother and her own brother's family; and the only raison why I b'lieve she does it is that she thought you had forgot all about her and took no

inthrust whatsomever in her—which, I know, was a parfect misunderstandin' on Kitty's part."

"Is it forget her?" said Mrs. Kildea with indignant astonishment in her face—"forget her! I wonder if she knows how much and how often meself and Rodgie talk of her; and how much we wondered, and were hurted and offended, that she never sent us a scrape of the pen! And all that notwithstandin'," Mrs. Kildea said magnanimously, "we had agreed that when old age and the rheumatiz should come on her we'd let her know that our door was on the latch to her."

"See that, now!" said Barney in wonderment, and seemingly addressing an ashy-tailed cat that had hitherto been taking little or no interest in the proceedings. "See that, now!" he said. And then to Mrs. Kildea: "Isn't it or not the pity of the worl' Kitty didn't know your kindly intentions?"

"And," said Mrs. Kildea, "it's manys and manys the time myself and Rodgie, sittin' alone with our two selves by the fire here of a night, wished and wished we had poor Kitty home to us from among the cowl' strangers, and sittin' warm and happy and contented in the corner there fornenst us."

"See to that, now! See to that, now!" Barney again remarked to the cat.

"And," said Mrs. Kildea with resolve, "as we were so wishful to give her the hospitality of our roof, and her half of our bite and sup when we supposed she'd be poor and in black need of it, I can't see where the blame or the shame'll come in if I make her the same offer now she's rich." And she looked a question at Barney, who replied quietly:

"Neither do I—neither do I."

"And," said Mrs. Kildea, "I'm not goin' to alter my course or to throw any slights on a girl whose only fault is bein' rich.—Pity I would, Barney Brian!"

"Just pity ye would, Mrs. Kildea," Barney Brian replied.

"And I'll not," said Mrs. Kildea with decision.

"Brave woman yourself," said Barney encouragingly.

"Though, of course," said Mrs. Kildea, "it would, as ye know, been an aisier matter for us to offer a corner of our small share to a poor and needy Kitty——"

"Of course, of course," Barney Brian said.

"Still and all, we've always had such great regards for her that I do believe we'll hardly grudge it to Kitty rich."

" 'Tis yours was the warm heart ever, ma'am," said Barney admiringly. And, having ascertained

that Mrs. Kildea's eye was on the fire reflectively, he winked at the cat who innocently winked back.

"Barney Brian," Mrs. Kildea said, "write me down Kitty's address and I'll get wee Johnnie to scrape a line to her the morrow—plaise God."

And when poor Kitty Kildea in her poor lodgings, got, one fine morning, the warmest and most cordial and pressing letter of invitation one could imagine, from her sister-in-law, Mrs. Kildea, on behalf of herself and her husband, Rodgie, Kitty thought she was dreaming. But when she assured herself she was awake by counting the contents of her wrinkled purse, and when, then, she contrasted Mrs. Kildea's wonderful act of generosity to her, now she was next door to destitute, with her indifference in Kitty's more opulent days, she saw the world was stocked with good people in disguise, and she thanked God first, and Mrs. Kildea afterwards. And though the proud Kitty would have scorned to accept a favor from her sister-in-law erstwhile, the emphatic cordiality of the invitation so wrought upon her sympathies that she accepted it at once, heartily, cordially, and without the slightest trepidation, in the generous spirit of one bestowing, rather than receiving, a favor.

Kitty Kildea sailed home to Ireland, and was received by Rodgie and Mrs. Kildea—who jour-

neyed all the way to the port of Derry to meet her—with delight and rejoicing.

And Kitty was truly and innocently happy in having found such loving, even if long lost, relatives.

And if her delight at their goodness was great at first, it grew as the days flew.

And it was great at first, for they would not even let her spend a penny. They wouldn't let her buy her dinner in Derry; they wouldn't let her purchase her railway ticket; they wouldn't even allow her to pay the porter. "Kitty Kildea," her sister-in-law said with warmth, as she pushed aside Kitty's ready if wrinkled purse, "Kitty Kildea," she said, "sure it isn't want to insult me ye do! Put away your purse out o' that, I tell ye, or ye'll have me flamin' with the anger." And poor Kitty, as she put away her little purse, thought she could never be half grateful enough to such a warm and liberal-hearted woman.

The neighbors were all pressed to visit Kitty, and feasted in her honor when they came. High holiday was held at Altamard, in Rodgie Kildea's, for three weeks after her return, till poor Kitty begged of them as a favor to allow the festivities to abate (so to speak), and let her settle down to the homely content of Rodgie's kitchen fireside.

It was very much against Mrs. Kildea's will that Kitty was permitted the content of the kitchen fireside, for she had planned that Kitty should live, as became her state, in the parlor; to which end she had had Eamon Scanlan, the handy man of the parish, for three weeks sawing and hammering there, giving to it as nearly as possible what she considered to be palatial magnificence; and she had purchased for it, from Pat the Pedlar, a dozen pictures at the beaten-down price of sixteen pence ha'penny; so Eamon, when he had finished the renovation and decoration, pronounced that "A king and queen might come in and dhrink their tay in it, and be proud."

So it was with great reluctance indeed and poignant regret on Mrs. Kildea's part that Kitty was allowed to resign the regal splendors of the room, where it had been meant that she should remain in state, for the homeliness of the kitchen hearth.

But Kitty must have the kitchen hearth, and Kitty had it. For a woman so wealthy the simplicity of her taste was a constant source of wonder to Mrs. Kildea and her worthy man Rodgie.

Mrs. Kildea, too, noticed how plainly, almost poorly, Kitty dressed. And it would have been a fretful puzzle to her, only Rodgie assured her he had heard that was the way all rich people in

the States did—the richer they got the shabbier they dressed; and the proudest of them dressed the poorest of all."

"It is well known then," said Mrs. Kildea, "that Kitty was always proud; so it's small wonder she should dress so poorly." And content settled in Mrs. Kildea's heart.

She prompted her husband to borrow the priest's car as a standing loan, and his harness likewise; and they yoked in it Rodgie's old gray garan, which he called Tickler, and which, when they went forth, devoted his energies rather to retrospection upon the queer vehicle that trundled after than to prospecting the roads that ran before—the latter lacking all interest for the staid and philosophic animal. Still, "to give Kitty her health and the seein's of life," as Mrs. Kildea put it, Tickler ambled dreamily forth upon some journey to the east or the west, the north or the south, each day. And Kitty was drawn over the country to all points of the horizon like a victor on a triumphal car. Mrs. Kildea appeased the impatient Rodgie, who was sore distressed at the loss of many days' work of Tickler, by telling him, "Rodgie, take my word for it, that a'fore our three sons is schooled and settled, Kitty Kildea'll pay goold for every ride she rides." Mrs. Kildea's plan of

campaign was very perfect, surely, and developed by due degrees.

Kitty was three months at home, and had been treated to all the pleasures Mrs. Kildea could dream of, and all the honors she could desire—honors, indeed, that embarrassed poor Kitty and burdened her oftener than they flattered her—before her generous hostess broached family affairs, and proceeded to take her into confidence thereon.

"It's an attorney," said Mrs. Kildea, "that I should like for to make out of Brian, and put Peter in for a doctor, and make a priest of wee Johnnie."

"That," Kitty said, "would be splendid entirely." And Mrs. Kildea was watching Kitty furtively.

"Splendid—yes," said Mrs. Kildea, "and would take a share of money." And Mrs. Kildea fixed a sidelong glance upon Kitty.

"Yes, yes, surely," the innocent Kitty replied, "it would take a share of money."

"A mighty big share," said Mrs. Kildea.

"I have no doubt of that," Kitty replied.

Then Mrs. Kildea felt for a minute like a woman who had unexpectedly come up against a blank wall—for a minute.

"Yes," said Mrs. Kildea, shaking her head, "a

power of money—a power of money it takes to make a priest and an attorney out of two of your sons, and put the other on for a doctor."

"Indeed, and it's a big undertakin' of ye," Kitty said sympathetically.

Mrs. Kildea, she coughed, and then paused a minute for a reply to the cough. But poor Kitty, she never detected it.

So Mrs. Kildea sighed. Then Kitty sighed. And Mrs. Kildea thereupon looked momentarily like one who would soon be impatient. But she recovered herself.

Mrs. Kildea looked into the fire, sighed again and remarked: "And money is purty scarce these times."

"Indeed, and sure enough it is," Kitty replied.

"And mortal hard to be got," said Mrs. Kildea.

"True words—true words, surely," Kitty said.

Kitty Kildea was an irritating individual. Mrs. Kildea confessed as much to herself.

"Rodgie, poor man," said Mrs. Kildea, "he has been scrapin' and gatherin' for fifteen years in order to put on our sons for dacent professions."

"And I say," said Kitty deliberately, "that is very creditable to Rodgie—very creditable entirely."

"And," continued Mrs. Kildea, "after fifteen

years' hard scrapin' it looks as if, after all, we'll not be able to do it."

"Ah, don't say it," said Kitty sympathetically. "That would be too bad."

Mrs. Kildea called up two tears—wherever she drew them from—and (so to speak) held them well in hand, as if she could not afford to lose them. She replied: "Hard it would be, seein' we had our hearts set on it—hard." And then she waited. Kitty Kildea sighed heavily and shook her head.

"And it looks," Mrs. Kildea said, after a little, "as if, after all, there's nothin' better nor Americay and hard work a'fore the three lads."

Said Kitty, who was truly grieved inwardly, "That's the way it looks."

"Unless," said Mrs. Kildea, with a tinge of aggravation (too slight to be detected by the all-innocent Kitty) in her manner—"unless some help that we didn't draim of turns up." And she looked hard at Kitty.

"Yes," said Kitty cheerily, "Providence helps ye. Ye're right, ma'am. Always expect help from Providence."

Mrs. Kildea showed unmistakable signs of provocation. She had to deal with a dense woman, indeed.

"It would be more fittinger for me to expect

it," she said, "from near-at-hand friends, wouldn't it?"

"Well, that's surely true," Kitty consented.

Mrs. Kildea made another diplomatic pause. But it was fruitless.

She resolved, then, to make a plunge.

"And under the disthressful circumstances," she said, "it's a kind friend would come forrid (forward) and help." Kitty Kildea must now declare herself. There was no escape, Mrs. Kildea believed.

Said Kitty, "Indeed, and it's so," and shook her head.

Mrs. Kildea was flabbergasted. And no wonder.

Kitty said further, "But a'tween yourself and myself and the bedpost—not to let it go no further—one may expect more kicks than kind friends in this world, people say."

The audacity of the woman took poor Mrs. Kildea's breath away.

"Not," said Kitty after a pause, "that it's my own experience. Only what I hear. For myself I've met with little else than kind friends." Mrs. Kildea's eager interest was reawakened. "Kind friends," said Kitty, "both in America an' here" —with marked emphasis on *here.*

"I'm glad to hear it. In troth I'm delighted

to hear it," said Mrs. Kildea, rejoicing with renewed hope.

"I can never forget *my* kind friends," Kitty said.

"Thanky, thanky, Kitty. But I beg ye'll not mention it—so far as any little kindness we have showed ye is consarned," said Mrs. Kildea modestly.

"And won't forget them," Kitty said decisively.

"It's entirely too good of ye to say so—entirely too good." Mrs. Kildea was elated at length.

"Won't forget them," repeated Kitty emphatically. "For I'm goin' to——"

"Oh, Kitty, Kitty," Mrs. Kildea protested. "I entrate of ye not to mention or mind any little kindness myself and Rodgie have shown ye."

"I'm goin' to, as I was sayin', goin' to pray for them night and day, in the next worl' as well as in this one."

Mrs. Kildea was disgusted, beyond the power of poor words to express.

She let her emotion subside before she said, as calmly as she could, "Prayer is very good indeed *in its way*. But"—she had resolved on another plunge—"it would be a mighty long time makin' an attorney out of Brian or payin' for the bishopin' of wee Johnnie. There's for ye!"

she said, giving her head a defiant toss that quite puzzled Kitty.

"What do ye mane?" Kitty said in bewilderment.

"I mean what I say, Kitty Kildea—when ye make me speak plain. Myself'll be mighty grateful for your prayers—none more so. But when it comes to the educatin' of my youngsters, while I'll appreciate your help in the shape of prayers, I'm afeerd I'm haythen enough to like it better in the shape of pounds.—Kitty Kildea, can I put it any plainer for ye?"

She couldn't easily.

It was now little Kitty's turn to toss her head. "Oh, indeed!" was all she said, but there was a world of meaning in it.

"Yes, *indeed!*" said Mrs. Kildea. "And since as all the world knows, ye have the pounds near about as plentiful as prayers, it would be small shame for ye to lift ten or twelve score o' them out o' the rust, and be kind to them that has been kind to you."

Kitty's face underwent several interesting changes as Mrs. Kildea unfolded to her this startling bit of information.

"Ma'am," said Kitty, "on whose authority, may I ax, have ye this?"

"The worl' knows it, as I said; and Barney

Brian toul' it," said Mrs. Kildea triumphantly.

"Ma'am," said Kitty, "I'm sorry then to inform ye that ye have been wastin' your kindness upon a pauper—through the rescality of that scamp, Barney Brian. But likewise, ma'am, ye'll not be imposed upon by this pauper much longer." And Kitty arose in her dignity and marched off to the room as stately as her comical little figure would allow. She gathered her few things together into her box, and saying that she'd send Michael Malloy as soon as possible to remove it and to liquidate her liabilities for three months' board and lodging at the same time, she bowed herself out—leaving poor Mrs. Kildea the most puzzled, dumbfounded and bewildered woman between Ireland's four seas.

Kitty went to board at Michael Malloy's. She would have nothing more to do with free entertainment, though she had offers in plenty from kindly neighbors. She sent word to Barney Brian to keep well out of her way. She resolved to knit and sew for an independence.

And lo! the second time she went to the town to purchase yarn, she found an American letter in the postoffice for her—from Aaron Boult. He informed her that she had more prescience than he; that his young wife had proved a sad disappointment and unworthy; that she was gone from

him—no matter how—never to return; that he offered to Kitty his most abject apologies, and expressed his heartfelt sorrow; that he begged of her to come back and take charge of his house once more, and of himself, too, whom she would find a wreck, not likely to trouble the world much longer.

Kitty was truly sorry for him, yet she hesitated for a few weeks. Her pride had been very, very sorely wounded; but when, at last, she had made up her mind to go, she was stayed by a second letter—this time from her master's solicitors—announcing that Mr. Boult, who had just succumbed to heart disease, had bequeathed her an annuity for life of a thousand dollars "for long and faithful services."

The countryside was *en fête* for the great good fortune of Kitty, whom all had grown to love very much. And everyone came to wish her long life, and good fortune—everyone except Mrs. Kildea, who sat at home, very, very glum indeed, and very much wroth with herself. Barney Brian came only because Kitty sent him a special invitation; and he was very shamefaced when he walked into her presence.

But Kitty set him at ease that night; and set him up as a carpenter the following week—a trade at which he held out for six months!

And though she never after could warm to the mercenary Mrs. Kildea, she was generous hearted enough with her own money to put wee Johnny in the way of becoming a bishop.

And while Kitty Kildea lived to a hale old age, the poor of the parish had reason to bless her. And when she died five-score of them prayed that "Kitty's soul might journey straight to God."

Barney Brian chided them for that their prayers were a wanton superfluity.

And I think they were.

VI

BILLY BAXTER'S HOLIDAY

BILLY'S holiday was taken in New York. His nephew Andy—Andy MacCarthur, son to his sister Nannie—was comfortably circumstanced there,—foreman in a printing-office downtown, married to an American, raising a respectable family, and occupying a fine house on a quiet side street in the Fifties, off Eighth Avenue. Andy, who was a good-natured soul, had always been inviting Billy to take a trip out to America for a few of the summer months. And at length, one year, after Billy had got down his little crop successfully and early, he turned the key in his cabin door in Knockagar and off with him on a visit to America and Andy—just "to see the lie o' the lạn'," as he put it to the neighbors who convoyed him far on the way to Derry, and cheered him off. Billy was of Scotch-Presbyterian descent, but we treated him like one of ourselves —which, indeed, he had become.

Exquisite was the sense of happy relief that possessed Billy's breast on the first morning he

opened his eyes in a cheery bedroom in Andy's home and reflected that, without delving or drudging, this day—and many a sweet day after —was going to provide for itself.

This was almost the first time in a weary stretch of half a century that Billy could rise and "throw his duds on him" without having his mind laden with fifty cares and five, and puzzling which he would attend to first.

As light as an air-ball and as bright as a button Billy felt when he stood at the hall-door, drawing deep breaths of the fresh air, and with beaming countenance taking in the details of Andy's street. As all his life a coat had been a troublesome piece of affectation when worn in the house,—or even out of the house, when it was not raining, or when he was not going to pay his rent,—Billy was now, of course, in his shirt-sleeves. Every morning it was Billy's delight to take the air thus, and get a glimpse of the world before breakfast. Billy had been told that the Americans were cold and distant, and that, even if they felt inclined to notice you, they couldn't lose the time necessary. But he found them otherwise. Few hurried past on either side of the street without glancing up at him. And they smiled too. Billy was pleased to have the Americans rise in his opinion. He, of course, saluted all of them.

"Top o' the mornin' to ye! ma'am.—Isn't that the purty mornin', glory be to God!" he said to one dignified, but amazed, madam: and "How does the smell o' that mornin' plaise ye?" to another. To a couple of young men who paused to inquire when he landed, Billy, coming down to the lowermost step, told a detailed account of his voyage, pictured the horrors of sea-sickness, and gave an account of how his crops were looking when he left, dwelling in particular on the fine show of praties there was goin' to be in the "lea-lan' on Patchy Gallagher's mearin'." They were deeply interested, and promised to come and have a longer chat with him again. To his surprise he discovered that they were not personally acquainted with Andhra—"me sister Nannie's son, Andhra. Why, he's in Ameriky this twinty-siven years, or it'll be twinty-eight come Lammas Day?"

They confessed that it was very stupid of them not to know one who had been in their country so long, but they refused, just then, to go in to see Andhra, as they were particularly hurried. Billy was much pleased with them, and as he gave them a parting hand-shake assured them that they were two "brave, sthrappin', modest young fellas, an' a credit to their mothers." When, then, Billy crossed over the street to admire Andhra's

house from the opposite sidewalk, and likewise scrutinize more closely the houses on that far side of the way, Mrs. MacCarthur saw him, and ran hastily to the door to hail him in. She reprimanded him severely for going out in his shirt-sleeves, and he smiled inwardly at her foolishness.

After his breakfast Billy took position on the sidewalk with back against a friendly lamp-post, and on the passers-by bestowed freely his opinion about the morning, and his prognostications for the remainder of the day.

When a gentleman whom he assumed to be the *fear-an-tighe,* the man of the house, appeared at a door opposite, Billy crossed over, and, mounting his steps, shook the gentleman's half-reluctant hand, informing him that he was uncle to Andhra beyant (motioning over his shoulder with the thumb of the disengaged hand), that he had only arrived yesterday, and that his name was Billy —Billy Baxter—"William, indeed, to the sthrangers, but"—and he gave the gentleman's hand an extra squeeze as he made the concession—"to friends always plain Billy. An' I'm happy to make your acquaintance, sir,"—for Billy prided himself on knowing the correct thing to say and to do.

"That's a fine house of Andhra's, isn't it? God

spare him! Why, Misther Russell himself can't brag of a much better house nor that."

His friend did not know who Mr. Russell was.

"Misther Russell! Why, Misther Russell's our Agent—Agent for all the Banagh property; an' likewise for Loughrossmor an' Loughrossbeg in Boylagh. This is a brave house o' your own; good luck to both you an' it! What rent's on it now, be your laive?"

The gentleman smiled good-naturedly and said he believed it paid fifteen hundred dollars. When, on the basis of a score of pounds to a hundred dollars, Billy grasped the idea of fifteen hundred dollars, he gasped for breath. He went down the steps, and from the middle of the street took a survey of the house. Then he came up again.

"Are ye tellin' the truth?" he said.

"Yes."

He whistled under his breath for some moments as he tried to realize the astounding thing.

"Ye have a turf-bank* into it, of course?" then he said, looking up at his friend.

"What?"

"Ye have a turf-bank, I say, into it, of course?"

"Well, I can't say there is—I should say no."

This set Billy whistling fiercely. He went onto

* Almost all our little farms in Donegal have turf-rights, or permission for their holders to cut turf free, in some bog.

the street again and strained his eyes looking at the house, still whistling forcefully under his breath. And when he mounted the steps again he said,—

"Ye're *sure* ye have no turf-bank into it?"

"Sure," said his friend.

"An' fifteen score i' pounds rent?"

"I believe that's it."

"Well," Billy said, "I'm rammed!" He passed the gentleman and going in of the open door-way, looked around the hall observantly and all over it from floor to ceiling, still whistling lowly. Then he pushed open the parlor-door and thrust in his head, soliloquizing, "An' no turf-bank!" But there were some young ladies in the parlor, so he hastily withdrew again—but, of course, not without having first taken off his hat and said, "A good-mornin' to yous, gissachs,* wan an' all. I hope the mornin' agrees with yous."

"An' no turf-bank?" he said again, but this time resignedly, to the gentleman at the door.

"No turf-bank," the gentleman said.

"Do ye know," Billy said in a warning tone, "how much they're chargin' ye for that house? Aren't you the *fear-a'-tighe?*†" he said on second thought.

"The what?"

† Girls.

"Aren't you the *fear-a'-tighe?* I say—the man i' the house?"

"Oh, no, I only board here."

"Oh, then I beg your pardon," Billy said. "All the same, ye'd be doin' the *fear-a'-tighe* a good turn if ye'd tell him from me that they're chargin' him for that house as much rent as is paid be the three townlands of Tievahurkey, Corracliave, and Meenariddery!"

Andrew's wife's name was Marguerite, but Billy simplified it to Marget, much to the disgust of the person most interested. Finding that her virgin name was Purdon, he, when wanting to be unwontedly confidential or impressive, addressed her as Marget Purdon.

A tramp solicited Billy for a nickel "to get a crust, boss." Billy eyed him closely. "Tell the truth an' shame the divil," said Billy. "Isn't it that ye wor on the tear las' night, an' want a cure this mornin'?"

The tramp, with becoming blush, shamed the devil; whereat Billy took him fraternally by the arm and helped him up Andrew's steps.

"Come along with me, frien', till I see if Andhra's missus hasn't got somethin' 'ill do ye good. This," he said, "is Andhra's—my nephew's."

The tramp said, "Oh! is it?" with interested surprise.

"It is," Billy said. "Come in.—Marget," he said, when Mrs. MacCarthur, all frowning, appeared, "if ye've got a good bowl i' thick milk, I want ye to give it to me frien' here.—Arrah, don't look so sore at the poor divil. He was at a wake or a weddin' or some wee friendly spree or other las' night, an' the best of us 'ill forget ourselves an' smell the bottle wanst too often at sich times." But Marget sternly pointed to the door, and the wanderer, obeying the signal, went out. Billy, who had sat down on a hall chair and was mopping his forehead and wiping the inside of his hat with a red handkerchief, got up here with a sigh and followed his friend.

"Hilloa! Hilloa!" he said, "take your time, oul' fella. Marget isn't in humor this mornin'. That's a public house, isn't it, at the corner? An' I've got a few sthray pince in me pocket. Don't blame her; she's as good-natured—Marget is—as ye'd meet in a day's thravelin', when she's in humor."

"I know it, boss," the wanderer said.

"Of course ye do. Here, guvernor, give me frien' here a cure."

"Give him what?" said the barkeeper.

"A cure—a half-wan—a half-wan i' whisky."

When Billy saw a whole bottle of whisky put before the man he got nervous, and objected that

he did not order a bottle. But the barman explained that this was American custom. Billy heartily enjoyed the idea.

"Well, I wish to the Lord," he said, "ye kept a public house in Donegal town, an' laid a whole bottle afore the boys when they come in an' ordhered half-wans! Let me tell ye, ye'd do a roarin' thrade—while ye'd last.—I'm Andhra's uncle, up-bye," he said, calling his thumb into requisition again. "I'm come over to spen' a month or two with Andhra an' Marget till I get to see the lie i' the lan'. I've already discovered wan fool in this street. He lives fornenst * Andhra's: he pays fifteen score i' pounds rent (as much as half the parish i' Killymard) an' hasn't a turf-bank into him!—Now, me good boy," he said, clapping his friend on the back when he had finished his drink, "go on, an' go to your work; an' if anything's sayed again' ye bekase of bein' late, just tell the truth an' shame the divil." Before he left the saloon he complimented its keeper on the elegance of it, and asked him how it paid him, and warned him always to keep good stuff and give no drink on trust—in which case, he assured him, he would do well.

Being warned by Andrew, Billy did not for several days venture alone out of his own street.

* Opposite.

He frequently went as far as the corners of Broadway or of Eighth Avenue, where he stood to watch the cars pass, and nod or speak an encouraging word to the motor-men. He gave them timely warning too when they were in imminent danger of being run down by succeeding cars. Often too when there seemed risk of cars going opposite ways colliding or brushing against each other, he exhorted the motor-man to keep her head off—with entirely successful results always. Possessed with innate gallantry, he never hesitated about assisting a lady or old gentleman off a car; and when he had put one in, he invariably requested the conductor to provide for her or him "a good sait." On the third morning he saw Andrew on the car,—insisted on doing so,—and then warned the conductor to "keep an eye to Andhra, an' see an' stop the car an' let him off at his office, now.—Good-mornin', Andhra, an' watch your step when ye're comin' off the car again. Good-mornin'."

Billy resolved one day to explore a little for himself and, of course, got hopelessly lost. He found a street, indeed, that should have been Andrew's street—it had all the marks and tokens of it, to the saloon on the corner—and the house that should have been Andrew's; but he could not recognize the woman who opened the door for

him; Andrew did not live there. Even the saloon-keeper was *not* the saloon-keeper who should have been there. It was very, very strange. He remembered how Rab McCunnegan of the Glibe had been taken away by the fairies, and Paddy Loch-beag of the Dark Moor, and he knew that he was now under their spell. After wandering a while longer, he took courage to stop a gentleman and inform him of his dilemma. The gentleman, to Billy's surprise, did not know Andhra, and Billy could not remember Andrew's number or the number of the street.

"Come with me, and I'll soon find where he lives," the kind gentleman said.

Billy found himself led into a grand shop, where the gentleman opened a tremendously big book, which, he informed Billy, would tell all about Andrew. Billy was a bit incredulous; but when the gentleman read out of this big book that Andrew was a printer, that he worked at No. So-and-so Liberty Street, and that he lived at Such-a-number in ——th Street (all which Billy recognized when he heard) he was astounded. Before he would leave the store he had to touch the book, and feel it all over, and stand back to admire the bigness of it. "Lochains O!" he said. "An' to think of Andhra havin' a great book lake that prented about him." When he learned that every

drug-store in the city kept one of these books that told all about Andhra his amazement was only equaled by his pride. His good friend put him on a car and gave the conductor instructions where to drop him. And, sure enough, just where the book had told he found Andhra's house!

Afterwards Billy took a perennial delight in getting lost—the more hopelessly the better. Then he would go to a drug-store and get them to read out from the book about Andhra, where exactly he lived; and when he had journeyed as directed, and so corroborated the statement in the book, his delight was complete.

"Where does Andhra live?—Andhra MacCarthur?" he would inquire of the druggist. When satisfied on that point he would ask, "Where is hees office?" and then, "What does he do?" The correct answers to all which having been heard by him with sincere pleasure, he loved to straighten himself out and astound the druggist with the startling information, "I'm Andhra's uncle!" Billy was anxious to know how much Andrew earned, but his sense of delicacy prevented him putting the question to his nephew. One day he was emboldened to satisfy himself somehow; so, after he had put his usual questions about Andrew in a drug-store, he nerved himself and asked,—

"An' what wages is Andhra makin'?"

The druggist looked so hard at him that Billy at once knew he had been too inquisitive, so he was not either surprised or angered when the druggist said sharply,—

"Come, get out of here!"

"It's no matter," Billy said apologetically as he backed out, "but I'm uncle to Andhra."

Jeremiah Johnston had left Knockagar, quite a lad, a score of years before. He had been successful, and was well known on Wall Street, where his faultless vests were the admiration and envy of every young buck who worshiped dress. Billy had twice met Jeremiah, and had been as heartily glad to see him, the son of an old friend, as he should. But, unfortunately, Mr. Johnston was in haste to overtake an engagement on both occasions, so that Billy had not the satisfactory chat with him he would have liked. But on an evening that Billy entered a crowded Broadway car he was pleased to behold Mr. Johnston there, though he held a strap at the farther end of the car, to which Billy could not push his way. But Billy's voice used easily to carry from his own hill of Dhrimaherk to that of Ednamoc on occasions when he wanted to warn Pat Gillespie's household (in the latter townland) that their sow was in the

corn: so he had no difficulty in chatting across a car.

"Musha, Jaramy," Billy shouted, "is it yourself's in it?"

Mr. Johnston acknowledged by a nervous nod of the head that it was himself. Some bucks with him, as artistically dressed as himself, clapped him on the back and roared with laughter at something or other.

"Troth, Jaramy," Billy proceeded, "ye're a well-picked-up man from thon (yon) day long ago that you an' your father's donkey back-loaded the manure to Tardy Byrne's Long Bottom.—A fine, big, bare-footed buachaill ye were then, with an appetite like Shan Ruadh's story—no end till it.—But, Jaramy avic, ye would niver guess who got married last Cock-Chewsda?* Shan's daughter, Avaleen, married to Peggy McGroarty's ouldest son, of Tullinagraina, Taidy! Ye mind ye had a notion of her oulder sister, Soracha, yourself.—Many's the pair i' brogues ye wore out, goin' on the batter up to Meenadhrim, to Shan's, after Soracha. An' throth an' if she saw ye now, it's she'd be the sorry girl that iver she refused ye for miserdly Pathrick Melly of Tullyfin.—An' say,

*The Tuesday immediately preceding Lent was set apart in Ireland for cock-fighting, and is still known as Cock-Tuesday.

Jaramy, do ye mind—— What! sure it isn't gone ye are, Jaramy?"

But it was gone Jaramy was. He showed as clean a pair of heels as ever a thoroughly frightened man did.

Billy, with Irish optimism, could not at all appreciate American grumblings at the weather. If in his presence anyone in the cars or the stores complained that it was "darned warm,"—"Arrah, man," Billy would say, "this is the weather that the young praties 'ill *make* in." And if complaint was made that there was too much rain, "Thanks be to God for the dhrop i' rain," he would say. "It's the best spell of weather ever was known for the kail—ye could see it growin' now."

On a Sunday Andrew had several friends to dinner. Mrs. MacCarthur had outdone herself in preparing an elaborate repast. When they were all seated Billy came down. He had that day put on a fine linen shirt, and it was as much from motives of pride as those of ease and comfort that he had left aside his coat. Mrs. MacCarthur, in consternation, whispered to him that he could not sit at table in his shirt sleeves.

"The sorra bit of harm it'll do them," Billy whispered back, his pride flattered. Mrs. MacCarthur then put her meaning more clearly.

"Musha, Marget," said Billy, speaking out,

with the least little show of indignation, "there's nothin' to be ashamed of in the stuff that's in them shirt-sleeves. Just feel it, ma'am," and he laid an arm before a lady who sat on his left. Though he carefully apologized, "I have a han' like a fut —don't look at it, only the stuff in me shirt."

"That," he assured her, "is Mary Jane Brinnan's own spinnin', an' Owen McDiarmid's weavin',—Owen of the Esker,—an' it grew on me own lan', in the Stony Park." But from Andrew's pained expression and head-shake Billy suspected it was better to humor Marget, and so, with the resignation of a martyr, sat down again in his coat.

During each of the preliminary courses Billy in a stage whisper admonished his immediate neighbors to "daif lightly; take my word for it, an' only take of these what 'ill fill the far-lands," strengthening precept too by example. But the draft which these courses drew upon Billy's patience did not warrant the humor of them. His patience gave out, and he said, "Marget, this is all very fine, but we all know ye've got a leg of mutton an' three ducks, so ye may as well have them thrin'led in at wanst."

And when at length they did come in, Billy rubbed his hands gleefully and crowed triumphantly. "What did I tell yous, boys an' girls?"

he said. "Now, if I had let yous go on fillin' yourselves up with all the nonsense was bein' carted in to yous (an' yous were makin' good shape at that same), ye would be now cryin'—like wee Johnnie Managhan of Tannatallan, the time Mrs. McCoy of Tullinalagan set the tay an' buttered bread afore him after she'd let him fill himself up with praties, without givin' him warnin' that there was tay comin'."

As the children in the parks were deplorably ignorant of the proper child games, Billy very profitably spent a series of evenings bringing them forward on "The Widow of Athlone," "The Sittin' Brogue," and "Barney, Barney, buck and doe." A squad of poor children at the North River, whom he had been teaching one evening, were so infatuated with "The Widow of Athlone" that they followed Billy to his own street and induced him to continue his tuition there—which the kind-hearted Billy did—until the inhabitants sent for the police.

But Mrs. MacCarthur was gradually breaking Billy in, and Billy's spirit was pining proportionately. When she at length got him inveigled into a stiff American dress, with painfully superfluous collars and cuffs, poor Billy's sorely tried spirit was nigh broken, and he expressed the wish to get home to old Ireland again.

The longing for home and the neighbors, he said, was overcoming him; and—though he did not confess this till years after—he sat down on a seat in Central Park one evening that the home-thoughts crowded on him, and wept.

Andrew filled both his box and his purse; even Mrs. MacCarthur did not forget him. Billy brought presents for every man, woman, and child, almost, in Knockagar.

The coming of a king could not excite the enthusiasm that was created amongst us by the return of Billy. We led him home in triumph, and held high carnival for a week after.

And round the hearth, on winter nights Billy's wonderful tales of adventure in foreign parts held fascinated for long and long afterward, some generations of good Knockagar folk.

VII

WEE PAIDIN *

IT was just two months after his poor mother (God rest her!) left us; it was on May mornin' itself—it's well I remember—that we laid the green sod above poor Mary; July it come round, an' every boy could was sharpenin' his scythe-hook and troopin' off to the Scotch harvest†—everybody could go was makin' the best strive to go, and every boy couldn't stay at home *had* to go, and no thanks to him.

I was wan o' these last boys, and 'twas sore it was gettin' on me to part poor Páidín, laivin' him without a father, as God had seen fit to laive him without a mother.

"Páidín a buachaill," says I till him, "I'll put a bit of a padlock upon the doore (for feard of thramps), and I'll laive you above in Lisahilly, in your Uncle Eamon's, where they'll take good care of ye till I come back."

* Pronounced *Paud-yeen.*

† Thousands of boys and men go from Donegal every year to win the Scottish harvest.

Little Páidín he cut me to the heart, the sorrowful look he gi' me. "Me mammie left me first, and now you're goin' to lai' me, daddie," was all he sayed.

"Páidín a mhilis," says I, "the rent must be made be hook or be crook. Irelan' can't pay it, and I must make Scotlan' do it."

Young as he was, poor Páidin knew well that, life or daith, the rent had to be forth-comin'.

"Ay, daddie," says he. "Then, daddie, I'll tell ye: ye go away to Scotlan' and earn the rent, and try to don't be long, and I'll spend the most of the time with mammie—in the graveyard—till you come back again. And I'll tell mammie every day that daddie's comin' home the morra, with the whole rent tied up in the corner of his han'-kercher; then I'll not be lonely, an' mammie 'ill not be so vexed for me."

"Chile," says I, and me heart was cryin' for the innocence of him, "it would never do for ye to be goin' that way to your mammie's grave, wakenin' her out of her peaceful sleep, an' troublin' the heart of her. It would never, never do, Páidín."

Then Páidín cried. "Och, daddie," says he, "I wouldn't for the wide worl' waken poor mammie. But, then, what'll I do? Och, och! no mammie and no daddie!"

I wouldn't ha' been half as grieved if I could ha' joined wee Páidín and cried to aise the weight was over me heart.

"Daddie," says wee Páidín, jumpin' up, "I'll go to the harvest with ye!"

"God bliss your yalla head, Páidín, but *that* would nivir do," says I, and it nearly made me smile, the manliness of him.

"Och, yis, say it will do, daddie—say it will do! Then daddie and Páidín 'ill be together always, and mammie she'll not waken till we come back. I'll tell Barney Friel to drive his cart the other road always and not the graveyard road. And then she'll niver know we're away so far from her. And sure, daddie, we can't help it."

There was no way out of it. If I left wee Páidín he'd be dead of grief and lonesomeness afore I'd be at Darry Quay. So, the very nixt mornin', out the both of us stepped. At the graveyard we went in and sayed a Pater-and-Ave over Mary, and then trudged, without a word passin' either of our lips, for three mile o' groun'. Páidín had a nice little blackthorn in wan han', that helped him along, and a small can of fresh milk in the other, and his pockets well stuffed with oat bread; I carried all our little belongin's in a red han'kercher on the end o' me own stick; and a jug o' milk likewise; and the scythe-hook more-

over. Right manly he stepped out, foot for foot with me; and he, like the oul'est han' on the road, lookin' serious far away afore him, as if he meant neither to sit nor br'ak bread till he'd be in Scotlan'. To see the spirit of him prided me and lifted me heart. Páidín 'ud trudge a mile and then I'd get him on me shoulder and carry him a mile. Only for the thoughts of his poor mammie's loneliness, who we were laivin' farther behind us at every step, we would ha' been downright merry. We left home afore the day broke. At a good dinner-time we had covered twinty mile of our journey, and had only fifteen more afore us. So in a convenient place by the roadside we sat down, and I produced hard bread and butter, and with Páidín's can of milk we made as hearty a male as ever tired and hungry men did. And wee Páidín with his back propped up again' a stone ditch, and his wee staff in his hand, dropped into a soun' sleep. I lit me pipe and watched the craiture—and it was better nor me dinner over again to me. He slep' for a solid hour, and when he wakened up he was as fresh as a spring mornin'—divil a morsel o' tiredness that he hadn't slep' out o' the bones of him.

"Daddie," says he, takin' up his little can and spittin' on his staff, "are ye ready?"

So the road we tuk again, with lighter hearts

than we felt yet, and we walked up Darry Quay afore the sun had gone out of the sky, and within less nor a quarter of an hour o' the sailin' o' the boat—near a'most late, for when I get sundered from home, it bates me to reckon sun and time.

It was a beautiful night, and Páidín, I put the bundle undher his wee head on the ship's deck, and he slep' like a king's son. The full moon was shinin' down into the craiture's face, and I sat watchin', watchin' him for an hour, and I shook me head, thinkin' of the manly wee heart was in him; and to two Marys in heaven, his own mother and God's mother, I prayed that they'd watch over him till he'd be the man he desarved to be. I slept meself then, with me back again' the mast, by wee Páidín's side.

The only wan thing cowed wee Páidín was when we went up Glesgow, where the crowds o' people, all rushin' distracted, and the tearin' about of horses and carts and coaches, and the rattle and the roar, was frightsome on him. "Oh, daddie," he says, as he gathered himself close to me, "sure, ye'll not be long till ye take me out of here?"

"Not long, *a paisdín,*" says I.

From we parted Glesgow we had five days' trampin' afore us, and a braver spirited nor Páidín, boy or man, didn't do the same tramp afore or since. I always bathed the wee feet of

him at night, and the legs—and he'd be droppin' asleep while I'd be doin' it—and then he'd always rise as fresh as the daisies, more eager for the road than ever. We got lodgin's in a wee town the first night, and the next night a kin'-hearted man (God's blissin' be on him!) made us free of his hay-loft, and the two nights after we slep' like princes in the open air—wan o' the nights on a river's bank, and the other in a haggard—and Páidín he always sayed in the mornin' he'd sooner pay to sleep that way than get paid to sleep again in such a dirty, bad-smellin' lodgin' house, as we paid our fourpence for a nasty bed in, on the first night. And heartily I agreed with Páidín there. I had, of course, as much hard-bread (well buttered) in me bundle as would feed both of us for a week; and we always then managed to get as much milk to buy every day as filled Páidín's wee can. It would do your heart good to see us sittin down in a shady place on the road-side in the hait o' the day, nicely tired, and spreadin' out our wee male upon the grass, and blissin' ourselves and fallin' to it as only hungry men can. And when I at length sayed, "God be thanked, *a paisdín!*" and Páidín sayed, "Thanks be to God, daddie!" and closed his eyes all at wanst for a half-hour's nap, I can tell ye we both of us felt the thanks in our heart.

All the time we were on the road there was only wanst I was vexed—but to the heart I was vexed then. It was comin' through a little town we were and I seen wee Páidín lookin', with the wistfulest eye in his head you ever seen, at a windy full of nice sweet-cakes. I fingered in me pocket the few wee coppers I owned. And then, "Páidín," says I, offerin' him a penny, "go in and buy for us a penn'orth o' them nice cakes."

All at wanst the longin' look left Páidín's eye.

"I'll not do nothin' i' the sort, daddie," says he, "for I don't want sweet-cakes; and well I know you don't. Daddie dear," says he, "it's far you traveled to earn the rent, and sure it isn't that ye're goin' to laive out on sweet-cakes for me wan of the wee couple o' pennies ye own? No, daddie," says he, "I'll have none o' your sweet-cakes!" But the very next minnit a windy full of picturs took Páidín's eye. "Oh, daddie, daddie," he shouted to me, and he jumpin' with joy, "come 'ere, come 'ere quick, till ye see home! Oh, daddie, daddie dear!"

And sure enough, wan i' the pictur's was just such a wee house—with wan wee windy and a doore—like our own wee house at home; and a clump o' bushes, too, like the boor-trees by our gavel (gable), and such another hill risin' up behin' it as our own hill where Páidín used to run

and tumble and rowl, as frisky as a kitten, afore his poor mammie died and the fun went out of 'im. "Oh, daddie, daddie!" says he, and the tears stan'in' in his wee eyes, God bliss 'im!—"oh, daddie, daddie, aren't ye glad?"

It was a paper pictur, and thinks I it'll not cost more nor a penny or tuppence; and even if it took three times that to buy it, Páidín, it'll be yours.

"Páidín," I says to him, "we'll buy the pictur; we can spare a penny or tuppence at our ease!"

"Daddie," says he, "I'd give the coat on me back for it, but, oh, if it cost tuppence, that would be more than ever ye could spare!"

"Spare or no spare, Páidín," says I, "it'll mind you of home, and I'm goin' to get it." And without another word in I marches intil the shop, and Páidín at me heels, the eyes in his head dancin' with joy. "How much," says I to the man behin' the counter—a surly-lookin' fella enough, God knows—"how much are ye wantin' for that little pictur in the left-han' corner i' the windy facin' out?"

He sayed that was somethin' he called an engravin', and the cost of it was eighteen pence.

The heart o' me went down at the word. I looked at Páidín, and there was a big tear shinin' in every eye of him. He seen me put me han' into me pocket, an' he caught a hold of it, and

"Come away, daddie," says he, tuggin' at me with all his might, afeerd I was goin' to do somethin' rash. "Come away, daddie," says he. And then I saw well that if I bought the pictur for him at such money he'd get small pleasure from it.

"Sir," says I to the shopman, "it's that the young *buachaill* took a particular fancy to the pictur, for it's like our own wee hut, an' our own hill at home—and his mother (rest her soul!)'s dead —and I thought I'd like to plaise him with it. But me money isn't (thank God!) as plenty as it might be. I thought the pictur might cost tuppence. But I'll give ye a sixpence," says I, "if ye can let me have it for that."

Páidín thought I was runnin' meself to ruin to plaise him, so he tugged at me stronger than ever.

The surly fella got red in the face. "Get out o' here, ye Irish tramp, ye!" says he. "Out! you and your brat, or I'll go aroun' and kick ye out!"

The blood boiled in me. *Irish tramp!* What I'd have done with the mean scoundrel God only knows; I'd 'a' l'arnt him, anyhow, that if an Irishman was (be God's will) poor and ragged, he had a spirit in him that wouldn't take abuse of either himself or his counthry off the han's of a *bodach.** This I'd 'a' taught the low fella in a very few minutes, only I bethinks me of Páidín, and

* An ignorant moneyed man.

obsarved what the innocent craiture was about. He let go o' me when he heerd the fella call me *Irish tramp,* and he edged up the shop a bit nearer the fella, he grippin' the stick in his fist like a worthy, and the wee teeth of him set, and the eye of him flashin' like I niver saw it neither before that day nor after it. I was proud of him, and the anger in me heart melted on the minnit. I naither used wan abusive word to the fella nor replied. I just give him wan look of contemp', and catchin' little Páidín be the han', "Come, Páidín," says I, "away out o' here!" and we both went out. When we traveled a quarther of a mile I took courage to look at Páidín, whose heart, I was sure, was burstin' and—would ye believe it? —the wee fella's eye was as dry as the road he was walkin' on!

Howsomever, Páidín and me had too much to think on, and we soon forgot that small scrape. But, behold ye, on the last day of our travelin' we were with about a score of Connaught men who come up to us on the road. And behold ye, this day didn't I take a nap to meself after dinner, and when I wakened up some of our comrades was started, and some startin'. Wee Páidín had tuk on with the Connaught men, and I, not seein' him now, paid no heed but that he had gone

on afore with the first batch o' them. And lo, when we overhauled the first batch, which wasn't till a couple o' hours later, what was me vexation to find that there was no Páidín with them! Some of them had seen him goin' íntil a wood beside where we tuk our bite to ait, followin' after a bird and didn't see hilt or hair of him since, but thought of course, he was followin' with us.

To lighten me, I tuk off me the shoes and stockin's and slung them over me stick with the bundle and tuk me hat in me han', and as I covered the groun' back again to the wood with the speed of a hare, there was many's the traveler stopped to look afther me. When I come to the spot, there was no Páidín there. I hid me bundle just inside the wood; I first looked up the roads, and down the roads close by, and of every wan I met I enquired afther Páidín, givin' them the marks and tokens, but got neither tale nor tidin's. Into the wood then I went, and wandered it up and down, hither and thither, from then till sunsettin' callin' "Páidín! Páidín!" at the top o' me voice, and gettin' sorra an answer but from the *Mac-a-talla** callin' "Páidín! Páidín" back to me again; and from sunsettin' till the sun riz the next mornin' —and long after—I was still either trampin' the roads about or wanderin' the wood (which

* *The son of the rock* (*i. e.*, the echo).

was a mighty great wan) again, searchin' and searchin', callin' and callin', but all in vain.

When the day was in it, I traveled a couple of miles of every road in the neighborhood, asked at every house, and stopped and queskined every wan I met—but no word of Páidín. At two o'clock in the day—and a broilin' day it was—after bein' on me feet without rest or pause for twenty-four solid hours, I felt I had to give in and sit me down. The grief was lyin' on me heart I can't pictur' to ye. I minded me then that though I had prayed, on me feet, as I niver prayed afore, me knee I hadn't bent to God since yisterday. So down behind a bush where none could see me I knelt on me knees and offered up me prayers, and asked God to have pity on me; and asked Mary, poor Mary, to intercede with God for me, and for the chile of her heart, her own Páidín. I felt aisier in me mind then, as I saited meself undher the shade of a tree, and lightin' the pipe, took off me shoes to aise the feet o' me, that was achin' with a great soreness. Near the road it was, and as I sat, who should come by but a gintleman that stopped when he seen me, and give me a great look.

"Good-morra, me frien'," says he.

"Good-morra, kindly sir," says I.

"You're an Irishman?" says he.

I looked down at me por oul' clothes, and "God help ye, poor Irelan'!" says I to meself. "Tatthers is the only token that the stranger 'ill know ye by." "Yis," say I, holdin' up me head boldly —"Yis, I'm proud to say I'm an Irishman!" The gintleman, I think, must 'a' seen I was nettled, for he says then, very kindly:

"And a good right ye have to be proud of it, honest man," says he. Then says he, "Would ye have any objections to lettin' me take a pictur of ye as ye are now?"

I looked at him a minute. "Ah," says I, "good gintleman, if ye had on your heart the grief I have, ye wouldn't make fun of a poor Irishman in distress."

"Oh, me poor man," says he, "God knows it's not fun I maint! But it vexes me to know ye're in distress." He put his han' in his pocket with this, and he pulled out silver out of it. "I can aisily spare a shillin' or two," says he, "to a frien' in distress."

I wasn't a bit angry at him, for (God bliss him!) I knew it was out of the kindliness of his heart he maint it. "Good gintleman," says I, "put your money in y'r pocket, and may God multiply it to ye! But the wealth of Spain," says I, "couldn't relieve the distress that's over me." And then and there I toul' him me whole story, and

he come in, and sat down on the grass beside me, listenin' to it, and God knows he nearly made meself cry when I seen the tears risin' in his eyes, and he snifterin' to try to keep them back. He actially fumed when he heerd about the fella that had ordered me, like a dog, out of his shop for an Irish tramp.

"Why," says he, shakin' his fist in me face—"why didn't ye smash that hound's bones for him?" I got a better opinion of Scotchmen then than I had been carryin' in me heart for some days back.

The short and the long of it was, he then told me that he was wan o' these men that drew the picturs ye see in the papers and in books, and he was then stoppin' in a farm-house near by, where he insisted I should go with him; and he'd get me employment there, whilst he'd put advartisements in the papers and write letter to them about Páidín, givin' his marks and tokens, to see if any wan could give information as to his whereabouts —and he'd also inform all the police barracks all roun', to put them on the trace of the craiture. It's seldom ever I felt as soft-hearted as I did listenin' to this gintleman's talk and plans, and seein' his consarn for a poor ignorant tattered Irishman.

Well, with him I went, and he got me employ

from the farmer he stopped with; and lost no time doin' all he was to do and all he could do to find Páidín. I waited and waited, and worked, though me heart wasn't in me work. But day after day come and went, and neither word nor sign i' Páidín. And at long and at last, for I couldn't stan' the fret of it, I wan day dropped the han'ful o' corn I was cuttin', took the hook in under me arm, and axin' God's blissin', set out afore me through Scotlan'. I didn't even wait either to lift me wages or to thank the good gintleman that showed me such kindness. This last put sore on me, but I knew if I give him a hint i' me goin', he'd put a stop to it. But I axed the good God to reward him.

For five weary weeks then I wandered back and forrid, up and down, workin' wan day, and then travelin' three days, on the stren'th of it, makin' enquiries everywhere I went, and from every wan I met with, but gettin' sorra a sign, or wan word of hope to cheer me on me journey. And at the en' of that time I foun' meself again in Glesgow, a sad sight different, and ageder man than him landed in it two months afore. And in a sort of a half-draim I put me foot aboord the Darry boat, and from Darry straggled home. But when I come near home I waited for night to fall. I

didn't know how I'd meet a neighbor, or how I'd walk into me own cowl', desarted cabin. When the night come down, I staggered on.

"Mary," says I, when the graveyard come in sight—"Mary, *a mhilis,** goin' away, me last words was over ye; comin' back me first words 'ill be to ye likewise! Sad wans they'll be, but sure ye're beyond the reach of heartbr'ak now—and to the great God I wish (if it was His will) that I was with ye, Mary—Mary, *a theagair mo chroidhe!*" †

I turned into the little graveyard. The moon was up. On Mary's grave, as I come to it, I seen a somethin' dark lyin', and then I heerd a quiet cryin'. As I run forrid to it the eyes i' me was blinded, and me heart baitin' so that it rocked me till I thought I would fall. "Could it be?" I tried to ask meself. But that minnit there was a scream, and I was caught roun' the two legs, and "Oh, daddie, daddie, daddie! Oh, daddie, daddie, I knew you'd come home! I knew mammie would fetch ye home to your own Páidín!" For, God be thanked, it was himself and no other was in it! "Every day and every night this two weeks I've come and I've prayed and prayed to mammie for to find ye, and send ye; and I knew mammie would

* Sweet (love).

† Treasure of my heart.

do it—I knew mammie would do it; she'd do anything for her own wee Páidín!"

I wasn't three days gone from the good gintleman's house when Páidín was found and fetched to him. He kept little Páidín for a couple of weeks, advartisin' for me all the time; and when he could get no news of me, thinkin' it likely I might 'a' gone home, he had Páidín sent on—with the pockets of him not emp'y.

"And down on his mammie's grave on our two knees, then wee Páidín and meself got, and with the white moon shinin' down into our faces, and callin' on his mammie to join us, from the bottom of two grateful hearts we prayed up to God's own throne a prayer, beseechin' that He wouldn't forget to reward the good gintleman who had foun' His childer in trouble and distress, and strangers as they wor to him, without expectin' bounty or raicompense, relieved them.

And, anyhow, I know that God heerd wee Páidín's prayer.

VIII

WHEN BARNEY'S TRUNK COMES HOME

THROUGH the length and breadth of the three parishes, from Carn to Corabor, and from Corabor over to Knockavinsheeran, there wasn't such a lad again as Barney. He was the envy of the boys, the delight of the girls, the soul of a spree, and the fun of a fair; he was the idol of the youngsters, and pointed a moral for the ouldsters; for, sure, no man nor his mother within the bounds of the barony ever beheld Barney Brian and a long face together in the one company.

He was as merry as a mouse in a cornstack, but as rougish as a rat grown gray in mischief an' morodin'. The lark herself didn't sing sweeter, nor rise earlier, nor think less of troubles of the morra. The hare hadn't a lighter foot scuddin' from the corn, the throstle of Murvagh Wood a lighter heart, nor the *Bacach Beag** a lighter purse.

Barney wrought to any man in the parish—or

* Little Beggarman.

the next to it—by day, and he attended every spree in the parish—or the next to it—by night. No wake missed Barney; no weddin' missed Barney; no berral missed Barney; no christenin' missed him. If there was a fair, Barney was the second man at it; if there was a raffle, Barney was the first; and if there was a dance, Barney was there; if there was a scuffle, me brave Barney was everywhere.

He owned as much clothes as was on his back, as much land as stuck to the soles of his brogues, and as much mother-wit as would dower a townland. As for the amount of thrickery in his head, there's no tellin' of it. Och, it's Barney was the boy, out an' out!

And then when the news passed that Barney Brian, the Lord bliss him! was bound for Americay, small wonder it made the young ones sad, and the wise ones glad. The boys said sorrowfully: "It's the Lord go with ye, Barney, *a mhic,** for the fun goes with ye, too." The girls said: "Barney, Barney, *a gradh,* sure it's not off with yourself ye would go, and us never to get a glimpse of ye no more."

And though the old ones remarked, when they heard tell of his setting out: "A tail win' to ye, Barney Brian!" still there was a something glis-

† Pronounced *avic* (son).

tening in their eye, that, if it wasn't a tear, was wonderfully like one.

No matter. Barney sailed away, and left aching hearts behind him in old Ireland. To the back parts of Americay he went, where his aunt, who paid his way out, lived. And it wasn't long, either, me brave Barney was in it till there commenced to come thunderin' fine reports from him.

Barney never had the poor mouth, anyhow; still, there must have been something in it, or he wouldn't have made such a blow out of nothing. He said the goold was for the picking up out there; that if ould Parra *Mor,* the miser that saved up the thirty-five guineas in the ould stockin' he used to keep up the chimbley, was out there, his teeth would water.

As for himself, he was paid like a prince for doin' sorra a ha'porth under the sun but marching around like a drum-major, from cock-crow to candle-light, with his hands in his pockets, and a clean collar every day of the week, giving plenty of good hard abuse to a gang of navvymen that was putting the bone through the skin trying to please him.

He said that himself and the President of Americay (who lived next door but one to him) was as pack as pick-pockets, and that the President wished to be remembered to John Burns

(the tailor at home, who read the papers), which put the same John so far past himself that, going to the chapel on Sunday, he wore his castor-hat to the one side, and only noticed the naybors with a nod; but he gave Father Dan the bow of a Lord Mayor's dancing masther.

The next word come from Barney, two ladies were paying him, he said, for the privilege of driving him through the streets and parks in a carriage that the two townlands of Thrummin Upper and Thrummin Lower couldn't buy the goold paint for alone. And they dressed him in a castor-hat, and goold buttons, and white trousers.

Finally, the glad news came from him that he was settled for life as a timber merchant, and that he had for customers some of the biggest and greatest men in Americay: and all the parish was delighted.

True it is, Long Andy's oldest son, John, of the Moor, wrote home that as reports went he didn't believe Barney Brian was coming the speed he might in the States, for that the same raking, roving, rambling spirit that made him in Ireland, marred him there; that he was up to his neck in hot water since he came out—no sooner in a job than he was out of it; that from being a gaffer at first, he was promoted down to a footman, and so

on, from bad to worse, till, at the present time (so Long Andy's oldest son, John, of the Moor, said) he was peddlin' matches on the streets.

But, good luck to ye! Long Andy's oldest son, John, of the Moor, wasn't going to make the neighbors believe this of such a genius as Barney Brian; the priest of the parish with the Bishop at his back couldn't do that. Small fear! Long Andy's oldest son, John, of the Moor, might better have saved his wind to cool his stirabout, and got a deal more thanks, and far more respect, for his pains.

It was a brisk evening in the beginning of the winter—Hughey *Ban,* Pat Haig's son, who had been in Americay for five months, the summer was a twelvemonth afore, called it "The Fall," —when lo and behold ye! all Knockagar was set a-goin' with the news that Newcome John, the carman, said no less a mortial nor Barney Brian himself was come home from Americay, that he was then on his way to Knockagar, and must arrive inside an hour's time.

And if that wasn't the sight! The very cripples from the rheumatiz, that didn't make a bigger journey for the past twelvemonth than from their bed to the *siostog* in the corner, and from the *siostog* in the corner back to their bed again, got up and ran out to welcome Barney Brian back to old

Ireland once more; and the old ones with the *givin'* sight, that couldn't hardly find the way to their mouths, come rubbin' their eyes to have a good look at him; and the very corpses—or they were as good as corpses—on the sick beds, called for a grip of Barney's hand, and a thimble of whisky in honor of the occasion.

A dance, and a real good, right royal, rollicking spree there was in Tim Lenihan's barn, to celebrate the home-coming of Barney the Rover. And it was fresh, indeed, he looked, with the smallest little taste of the Yankee in his look and in his talk. And trim and neat was he, as dandy as the gentleman he was cut out to be.

Only, he had no Americay trunk; just a little hand-bag—a pormantle, he called it: for his trunk, it would seem, went astray somehow (as ill-luck would have it), coming off the boat, and had gone up the Tyrone side.

He passed the remark that, not being as light as Micky John Oonah's big Americay box, the time it fell open by mistake, when the boys were carrying it home, and showed just two dirty collars and a red hankerchief lying in the bottom, he couldn't look after it as he'd wish, and had to hand it over to the care of a cartman that sent it on the wrong track; so he'd have to wait on it a couple of days or three before he'd get it.

Now Barney, since his poor mother passed away, some years gone, had neither chick, child, kith, kin, or relation, nor a handful of thatch he could call his own. But it was he was the lad knew how to invite himself where he wanted, and without trouble make himself at home. Into Shan Mháire's, of the Black Bog—brother-in-law to Hudy Pat Hude, and father to young Mickey Shan Mháire; a warm house, in troth—he walked, on the second day of his arrival. And you may swear it was they was the glad people to see Barney. It was:

"God save all here, and how are ye, Shan Mháire? And Shiela, good woman, how do ye stand it yourself? And how are all the childre? God bliss them all—and all of us this day!" says Barney.

And *"Ceud mile failte romhat, a Bhairnie!* The blessin' o' God about ye! an' is it yourself's in it at all, at all? An' it's from the bottom of me heart I'm glad to see ye. Is it fall from the skies ye did? Man-a-man! how are ye, anyhow? An' but this is the glad day for me," said Shan.

And "The Lord be good to us all, an' save us from misfortunes! sure it's not Barney Brian we have in it? Orrah, Barney, *a leanbh,* but it's welcome ye are, an' my seven thousand blessin's be on ye! How is every bone in your body? Bar-

ney, Barney, Barney, *a gradh!* ye're welcome back to old Ireland, an' that ye may have the good luck with ye, but it's meself's glad to see ye!" said Shiela.

And "Barney, *a chara,* draw yerself up to the fire, an' take this sait, for in troth ye're as welcome as the flowers o' May. You, Jaimie, *a mhic,* an' the rest of you childre, draw in your bare shins, an' sit round an' make room for Barney, the sowl, till he sees a gleed o' the fire, for the craiture must be starved.—Run away with ye now, Jaimie, an' play yourselves, or slip over to Rosie Mughan's an' get the *Bacach Fada* to put queskins, an' guesses on yous. Now, Barney, *mo chuisle,* sait yourself down, an' give us some of the wonders while I fill the pipe for ye," said Shan.

"Thanky, thanky, Shan," Barney said; "an' me heart's thanks to your good woman, Shiela, likewise, for your nayborly welcome; for in troth it's kind, an' the crame of kindness both of yous is, and always was known to be.

"It's often an' often, when I was among the black strangers, an' gettin' the cowl shoulder an' the blue look stranger gives stranger in thon country over thonder—it's often an' often then I thought of Shan Mháire an' his good wife Shiela, an' the sort of welcome wan got, whether friend or stranger, from them, if wan ever chanced to

cross the Black Bog; an' I'd say to meself: 'God be with ye, Shan Mháire; and your good wife, Shiela, that ever had the warm word, the hearty welcome, an' the sate in the chimley corner for them come across ye.' Troth, it's many's the time I said it."

And Shiela said: "Kind father to ye, Barney; but it's grateful we are for your respects; but meself an' Shan never did much to desarve it. More shame for us, if we wouldn't be always glad to see a naybor, or a naybor's chile; an' a kind word an' a sate in the corner didn't cost us much.

"When a fren' come to see us, it was we was under the compliment. An' as for the stranger, sure we'd be doing no more nor the black savage himself would do in offerin' welcome an' a shelter. When God blesses us with the bit an' the sup (an' it's thankful to Him we are for that same, day an' night), an' the roof over our heads, He'll surely do no worse by us, nor think no less of us, for knowin' the stranger an' the wanderer—they're as much His friends as them lives in a castle—maybe more."

And "True for ye," Shan said.

And "True for ye, thanks be to Him!" Barney Brian said.

"But it's home again from Amerikay ye are," Shiela said, "an' tell me now, did ye, in your thrav-

els, see or hear tell of our wee Mickey (may the good Lord watch over him, wherever he is)? He is in a place called Illinoy."

"Well, in troth an' I did see wee Mickey, Shiela, an' spent a day an' a night with him—an' be the same token as good a day an' a night as I had from I left Ireland till I planted my toes in it again—a day an' a night with Mickey on my way here—for I called around through Illinoy just specially an' particularly to see him.

"An' bravely he looks; as clane stepped out a young man, as daicent and as ginteel, as any other I met out of Ireland. A credit I call Mickey to the father an' mother that reared him—an' you'd say the same yourself if ye saw him. But Shiela, good luck to ye, he has sent ye home, with meself, the present of the makin' of as purty a dress as ever went to the Collamore Chapel—a beauty it is, an' fit for any lady in the lan'."

"What!" said Shiela; and "What!" said Shan.

"God be good to him! it's Mickey is the *garsa* wouldn't forget or neglect his poor old mother."

"And God be good to him over again," Shan said.

"A purty dress?" Shiela said.

"Oh, a rale delight, ma'am," Barney said. "The sight of it will be better nor three years to your life."

"I'm feelin' young when I think of it, Barney, *a gradh.*"

"What will ye feel when ye see it, then?" Barney said.

"Ay, an', what will she feel when she wears it?" Shan said, with a sparkling eye, and a shake of the head that showed a deal of satisfaction.

"Hurrah, for ye, Mickey!" Shiela said, jumping to the middle of the floor, and cutting a double shuffle, and a couple of clever swings around, that she didn't try since her coortin' days afore.

"My jewel are ye, Shiela!" the admiring Shan said. "I knew it was in ye! Ye're young yet."

"Faix," the knowing Barney said, "I know many a consaited bit of a *girseach,* on the lookout to catch a man, would give half of her fortune to be able to do that double-shuffle an' the swings round, with the same graceliness an' aise that Shiela's after doin' it there. After this, anyone in my presence that refers to Shiela as an oul' woman, I'll have the pleasure of callin' them a liar."

"Hooh!" said Shiela, going through another figure; "I'm as young as I was eight-an'-thirty years ago. Shan, *a thaisge,* do ye mind the night long ago in Padh's of the back of the Hill, that they had the fiddler from the Three-mile-water—Devenny was his name—that we danced *down* the

house, an' the Three-mile-water man had to let the bow drop out of his fingers with the pure fatigue, an' confess that in all *his* career he never did see such a piece of dancin', and that we were the first pair of dancers ever made him give in.

"Shan, *a gradh,* I dar'say you didn't keep the reck'nin', but it's eight-an'-thirty years ago this night, the second Wen'sday after Hallow Eve, an' it's just awhile ago I was thinkin' of it, an' runnin' it over in me mind, afore Barney there come in. An', Shan, *a chuisle,* we're as young as ever! Jump on to the floor here till ye see—an' you, Barney, if Americay hasn't lost it to ye, you can whistle us a reel that a fiddler in the parish couldn't bate."

And no sooner said than done. Up jumped Shan with the heart of nineteen under an ould man's coat; an' to it, like a pair of youngsters on the edge of their welt, went Shan and Shiela, while Barney blew on a penny tin whistle he hauled out of his pocket, an' struck them up "The Hare in the Corn," in a fashion that showed Americay didn't damage his windpipe.

Heel and toe, toe and heel, swing about, hands across and change places, sidey and sidey, back and forrid, up and down, went the ould pair on the floor, with their heads thrown back and their cheeks red, their chins nearly meetin' one minute

and sunderin' far the next—why, the very fire on the h'arth caught the dancing like a disaise, and went leaping up and down keeping time to the steppin'; and their big shadows, up the walls and spreading over the roof, went bobbing and bobbing, keeping time to all.

Altogether it's hard to tell where or how it would all end if the *Bacach Fada* hadn't come walking in of the door to them when the play was at its height; and speechless he stood the minute he entered, wondering what in the name of all that was wonderful had come over Shan Mháire and his good woman Shiela that had set them off this way; and to crown it all, Barney Brian, the come home Yankee, nearly as big a fool as them, sitting in the corner, with his two cheeks like bagpipes, puffin' at the tin whistle.

And if the *Bacach Fada* was speechless, maybe me brave Shan and Shiela wasn't ten times more so. And upon my socks they stopped the bouncing on the floor soon and sudden anyhow. For the *Bacach Fada* was the pattern for the parish—first to Mass on Sunday, nearest the priest while it was going on, and the last away from it, as well as the greatest and loudest crier during the sarmon. No one ever thought of disputing his right (next to Father Dan) to look after the morals of the

people, young and old—and sure enough there was nothing he went sorer again' than dancing.

And then for Shiela and Shan, the pair of them with one foot in the grave and the other hardly out of it, to be caught by him hopping and bouncing like a pair of foolish frogs below in the Mearn of a spring morning—'twas small wonder the blush came into Shiela's withered cheek, and Shan slunk away into a seat in the shadow!

And "Ha, ha, ha!" says Shiela, forcing a laugh, "'tis no wonder that you look at us. Ould fools they say is always the worst of fools. But, ye know, 'twas the news Barney here—the blessin' of God be about him an' his—fetched us, that put us thinkin' of ould times when we were young an' light-hearted, an' knew little an' thought less of the troubles of the worl', till we thought we were young agin, an' got out on the floor to see was our bones as nimble as our hearts—God be with them times!"

True enough, the *Bacach Fada* didn't say much but it was easy seen he might be better pleased.

He only said: "Ay, just so, just so! Comin' to the house, I was makin' a wee wager to meself that I'd find Shiela and Shan—an ould couple on the varge of Kingdom-come—makin' their sowls. I dar'say it would be oncommon pleasant if we could dance our way intil the Kingdom of Heaven,

but I've read a dale of the Scriptirs an' I must say I've never yet met the rayceipt."

And Shiela, good woman, was cut to the bone. Small wonder!

Shan didn't show his face out of the shadow for the remainder of that night.

But *moryah!* the *Bacach Fada* was soon pacified. For Barney he told him that he bought, specially for himself, on the quay of Americay, as he was about to leave, the purtiest rosary ever he laid his two eyes on; it was a quarther-stone weight if it was an ounce, and every individual baid on it was the size of a chicken's egg.

This was the more particularly pleasing to the *Bacach Fada* because, on last Sunday, the *Bacach Beag* (a pious craiture who gathered *his share* likewise) had come to the chapel with a string of beads that put his—the largest in the parish before that—into the shade, and made him pray with more bitterness than usual.

When he thought of the vengeance he'd now wreak on the *Bacach Beag,* praying his loudest and most tempting at him across the aisle, with Barney's baids dangling before his eyes, he got into great good humor, and poor Shiela's reputation was saved.

Of course, all were sorry to find that Barney's trunk had gone by mistake up the Tyrone way, and

didn't yet come to hand, but even the prospective pleasure was keen.

Shiela invited Barney, to be sure, to make himself at home in her house, such as it was, for the next few days—and she couldn't do less.

But Barney had too much decency in him to impose on her, especially when he had a wide field and plenty of game before him.

On the next night he stepped over to Taig-a-Gallagher's, intending—for Taig was well-to-do, and a bit near-going—to stop a good part of a week there.

"Taig," says he, "ye'll have to excuse me for the delay in lettin' those little presents reach ye."

"What—which—what presents?" Taig asked, naturally a bit surprised.

"Oh, why, didn't I not tell ye, Taig? Why, I surely thought I sent ye word, the first thing after I come home—or if I didn't it was me own fault, for I know I had it on me mind to do so—send ye word that I had stepped off at Texas—on my way coming from Washington—to see your son John —daicent, clever boy he is, an' a credit to his country no less than to his people, and so his landlady tould me—to see your son John, an' he sent several little articles of some value to yourself and the weans—daicent, handsome presents they are too, like the man sent them.

"They're in my trunk—an' bad snuff to the porters, and good corns to their toes every day ever they wheel a hand-cart!—Wan of them sent my trunk astray up the Tyrone way an' I'm expectin' it every day. The day afore I left him, too, John got appointed Under Sharriff of Texas with a salary of a pound a day an' foun'."

Now, Taig was the man to look at the two sides of a ha'penny before parting with it; but, there and then, Barney got the hearty invite to call the house his own for a week; and he took it without debate. And, furthermore, as it turned out he was suffering from a disease on the lungs for which the doctors had ordered him his fill and plenty of chicken broth (so Barney himself said, and who should know better). Taig's stock of chickens was remarkably smaller when Barney's week with them was done.

Micky John Hude came in for attention from Barney next—for, strange to say, the trunk had not yet arrived, though Barney was daily expecting it. Micky had his oldest son, Donal, in a broker's office in Quebec.

"It's very strange," Barney remarked when greetings were over and he had seated himself at Micky's big blazing fire, resolving within himself to hold the seat for the next few days, "it's very strange entirely, Micky, that Paddy Trower's little

garsun, Jimmy, didn't carry ye the word that I b'leeve to the best of my belief I sent with him the very night I landed—that I had called at Quaybec to see Donal, and that he sent a lovely shawl with me to his mother—the Lord give her health to wear it!—an' some other little things. I have got them safe in my trunk, but the trunk, I suppose ye heerd, went astray up the Tyrone side—sweet bad luck to them put it astray—and I don't expect it sooner nor Wen'sday."

"And Barney, *a stor,* what sort's the shawl?" Sally asked.

"Oh, a purty one, ma'am; the likes of it wasn't seen in these parts, I'll venture to say anyhow, since Methusalem's cat cut its eye teeth, nor won't be seen again for some time to come. I b'leeve it's silk or something of that sort, with a whole lot of different colors in it, every different way you look at it; but myself can't rightly say, for I'm not well varsed in them things."

"Well, God be good to poor Donal, it's himself wouldn't forget me. I'll warrant now, Barney, that same shawl 'ill wear me well!"

"I only wish, Sally, that ye may niver die till ye wear it out, and then a blackenin' box'll make a coffin for ye, if it's taken in at the sides."

"An' does Donal' think of marryin' now at all, at all?" little Shusie asked.

"Well, meself doesn't well know. If ye'd b'leeve himself he'll not marry till he comes home to Ireland to get the wife. But if I'd b'leeve me own senses when I saw him gallivantin' about with the Lord Mayor of Quaybec's daughter at the Quaybec Harvest Fair, I'd be after expectin' that if there's e'er a poor Irish girl silly enough to be keeping a warm spot in her heart for Donal, she'll cry for it some day."

Micky John Hude's was a home for Barney for four days—and a warm home.

Still, the trunk hadn't come, although he was mysteriously getting daily intelligence of it, and there was great furore all over the countryside about it. The fact was that the crops, and the weather, and the political outlook were all completely forgotten at the Knockagar forge, and in Micky Thomas's the shoemaker's, and at Crooked Neil, the tailor's, now the subject of Barney's lost trunk was started.

The debate on the subject waxed as warm as ever a debate on politics did. And there were many, very many, shrewd conjectures as to its probable whereabouts, and wise suggestions as to the best means of capturing it soon, and fetching it home quickly.

Barney lived many months on that trunk's reputation. By that time he had laid a great part of

the countryside under tribute, and left few districts undone. Putting two and two together, it would appear that Barney had seen in Americay every man, woman, and child that ever left that part of Donegal, and crossed the ocean; and moreover, that he had been intrusted with presents from every mother's soul of them.

He had called on neighbors' childre alike in New York and San Francisco, Manitoba and Atlantic City, Montana and the borders of Mexico, and he must have had a trunk the size of a barn to carry all the presents sent with him to the old ones at home.

It's now forty-five years, and some odd months into the bargain, since the great day on which Barney came home from Americay. His trunk is still up the Tyrone way, and still expected, and it cannot come too soon or too sudden: as Barney promised our mothers and fathers, they, in their turn, have been as liberal with us, so that at the present time within the broad bounds of the Barony of Banagh there isn't, I suppose, man, woman, chick or chile that isn't in the expectation of big things on that great day when BARNEY'S TRUNK COMES HOME!

IX

FIVE MINUTES A MILLIONAIRE *

THOUGH 'tis little the world suspects it, there's near a'most as many fairy enchantments in America as in the Gem o' the Ocean itself—and 'tis Brian O'Gaffeney is the lad can swear to that.

And Brian's was as quare a story, surely, as ever happened out o' the Emerald Isle.

Brian, though he'd as good a wife, Kitty, as breathed the breath of Americay, and as brave a son and winsome a daughter as ever stepped in Americay shoeleather, and as trig and snug and warm a little home (a short ways from Central Park) as you'd meet between here and there, and though he'd been, as he should be, happy as a mouse in a mill since the day he married Kitty with good luck for her fortune, the divil (for it could be no other) set his mind workin' about millioneers the time Molly Carney's Johnny suddently got the lump in the contractin' business, and paid a barrel o' money for a yacht to rowl him

* This story is founded on an old Irish folk-tale.

round the worl' as well as to Japan. Poor Brian! he moidhered his mind entirely thinkin' day an' night upon this, till mighty soon, from bein' the happiest mortal under Heaven, he became the miserablest divil crawlin' on two feet.

"I don't see," he'd complain, "what the Lord had ag'in' me, anyhow, that He wouldn't make a millioneer out o' me, same as Molly Carney's Johnny, or William D. Munibagges, the famous millioneer, or a dozen more who have a darned sight less right to the money!"

The poor man's peace o' mind went like snow in June, and when his wife Kitty tried to raison with him, he that used to adore the ground she walked on, cut her with a curse, and tould her he'd never again be happy till he was either a millioneer or a madman.

And the more he figured to himself how he could command all the world's happiness, if the Lord should try him with only ten million atself, the more distracted he became. And when at last one lovely May Sunday, before he'd got over the temper that Kitty's askin' him to buy her a summer dress Saturday night had sent him to bed in, he learnt that his handsome daughter Peggy (who he had marked out to marry a million) wanted his blissin' to throw herself away on a boy of the Corrigans who drove a truck, and

that his son Tom was walkin' out a daughter of the O'Keefes, whose father back in Ireland kept only three cows, he flew into a passion entirely. And him who in all his married years before had never raised his hand higher than his voice, and whose voice was never heard over the threshold, swore he'd clean out the caravansary—wife, son, and daughter, bag, baggage, and belongin's! And when they'd scurried into mouse-holes, and he couldn't get a sinner, even, to answer him back, he clapped his hat on his head, and cryin' out for the ten-thousandth time, "Why didn't the Lord make me William D. Munibagges?" tore out o' the house.

There's a little rocky hillock that you may see any day in that shady corner of the park contagious to Brian O'Gaffeney's home—a very pleasant, sunny knowe it is on a summer day, and one that would entice a man to come up and lie down and sleep (as many's the time it entized Brian till he brought the park policeman on his track)—neighbors used to vow was surely a Fairy Hill if the like was in Americay. And 'twas this very hill Brian now steered for, his heart full o' blackness. And cryin' out for the thousand and oneth time, "Why didn't the Lord make me William D. Munibagges, anyhow?" flung himself face down on the fairy knowe, bemoanin' how woeful

and vexatious for a poor workin' man was the worl' that in his fool days (as he now called them) he thought was heaped with happiness.

And, lo and behold ye! he hadn't been long bemoanin' upon the knowe, when what would you have, but by some wonderful process, the workin's of which Brian himself can't yet rightly understand, he suddently found himself seated in the grandest room of one of the gorgeousest mansions on Fif' Avenoo! And he wasn't Brian O'Gaffeney any longer, but William D. Munibagges, the famous millioneer! Like statues in every corner of the room were ranged a gang o' flunkies lookin' like they'd greased themselves and taken a rowl in the mint, all waitin' for his nod or wink to leap like jumpin' jacks. And there was a truckload of letters on the table beside him, with a steam letter opener operatin' them at a mile a minute.

Brian was so dazed for the first minute that he couldn't believe his senses he was railly William D. Munnibagges, but when his clerk handed him a goold fountain pen and a check for a million to sign, and he found himself as slick as slivers, writin' "William D. Munibagges" to the bottom of it, he put a hearty "Thanks be to God!" out of him; for he knew his wish had come true. While he was mighty proud of the natural mil-

lioneer style in which he wrote his name so that no one could read it, he wondered what in the name of Lanty he was payin' away the million for, anyhow; but he daren't ax for fear to make the clerk suspicious. And, anyway, what did a miserly million matter to him?

Of a suddent, however, he found himself puttin' out of him a screech that nigh tore a hole in the ceilin'! And he yelled, "Crack the skull of the murderer who's drivin' a spike through me toe!"

"Your Honor," says the head flunky, "that's your gout, you know."

"Gout!" says he. "Ye brazen lump of a lobster, will ye stand there and tell me to me face I've got the gout?"

"You know, your Honor," says the flunky, "it's been makin' your life hades for fifteen years gone."

"Oh, it has, has it?" says Brian, says he, his eyes openin' to a new light.

"But," says the flunky, "with the help of the Lord and Dr. Donnelly, it'll not grow very much worse during the remainder of your natural life."

"Thankee for the consolation!" Brian snaps so sharp that the flunky thought his nose was gone. And to smother the grief this news brought him, Brian remembered that he now had the best and dearest of all aitables and drinkables underneath

the stars. So he was gettin' mighty pleased with himself again when he give the order, "Bring me in a haunch of venison fried in lard, a stuffed turkey, some nice rashers and eggs, a plate of pig's feet with cabbage, a bottle of every kind of wine you've got in the icebox, and a box of the dearest George Henry cigars."

The line of flunkies, like a rijiment of tin men workin' on strings, all together threw up their hands in horror, a look on their face like someone stole their last penny, and the head beetler of them, bowin' till his three ends met, said, "We're mighty sorry, but your Honor knows that on your gout's account you mustn't look on liquor for five years. And a cigar you daren't touch because of your insomny."

"Insomny! Me insomny! What the divil do you mane, Sir?" Brian yelled, lookin' round for somethin' to throw at him.

"Why, you know, Sir, better than me," says the flunky, "that three hours a week is the most you've slept in ten years. But, with good care and no tibbachy, the doctor thinks, five years from now we'll have ye sleepin' like a top at least three-quarters of an hour every night."

"Jumpin' jiminity!" says Brian. And he snaps, "Then bring me the venison, turkey, rashers and eggs, and pig's feet and cabbage! I'll try

the best I can to make a light lunch upon the snacks."

The scoundrel of a flunky just shook his head. He said, "Your indigestion, you know, doesn't let you eat any kind of meat no more. Cabbage is poison, with your liver in the state it is. And I'd be tried for me life if I gave ye anything in the shape of an egg. If you railly feel hungry, I'm allowed to get you some skimmed milk with lime water, and, at my own risk, an onion pickle on the side."

The fellow had raison to thank Heaven he had no rheumatiz in his joints when he jumped to dodge the stool Brian shied at him. And Brian was lookin' around for some other convenient remarks to hand out to the villain, when the voice of his clerk spoke up from somewhere among the letters:

"If you'll give me a few minutes of your time, Sir," says he, "there's some communications here that needs your attention."

"Checks?" says Brian, says he, lookin' to see where was the clerk's head.

"No, Sir," says the clerk; "but there's two ton o' letters from charitable societies requestin' sums that this mornin' only total ninety-nine million three hundred and forty-seven thousand six hundred and thirteen dollars and forty cents."

"Bad luck to them!" says Brian, with all his heart. "Them charitable societies are the barefacedest robbers on the worl's ridge! Send them somethin' to get my name in the papers, though."

"How much?" says the clerk.

"Forty cents," says Brian. And then he says aloud to himself. "That makes ninety-nine million saved at one stroke. Not a bad mornin's work." And he was feelin' good again. "Is that my photographt," says he, "that I see on the front page of the mornin's paper beyond you?"

"It is," says the clerk. "I wanted to tell you about that."

"Let me see it," says Brian, very proud and smilin'. "Them newspaper chaps are daicent fellows. Send them a dollar to get a drink."

"I wanted to tell you," says the clerk, snappin' the paper from him, "that the rascals put in your photograph as the man who squeezed out of business a poor widow in Pennsylvany, who was strugglin' to raise a large family of small childher, two of whom died yesterday of starvation. 'Robber' and 'Murdherer' are the aisiest names they call ye."

"Send the scoundrels a writ!" roars Brian as the gout in his toe made him bounce like a rubber ball, yellin', "Holy Murther!"

"If you try that," says the clerk, "they'll never

rest till they rake up a rijiment of widows out of whose mouths and the mouths of their helpless childer you've stolen bite and sup."

"Ye lie!" says Brian. "I never in all my life stole bite or sup from widow or child."

"Of course," says the clerk, says he, "it wasn't stealin'; 'twas in the interests of trade. But," says he, "we'd better get ahead with the mail. Here's a warnin' from an arnychist with the skull and crossbones on it, and one from the Black Hand requistin' a hundred thousand dollars within twenty-four hours."

"I'm ruinated out an' out," says Brian.

"And givin' minute descriptions where it is to be put," says the clerk. "A man from Ioway writes to say that if you don't send him twenty-five thousand by return mail, he'll give the papers full particulars of how your great-granduncle stole a dollar from a blind beggar. Another letter is to tell you that the treasurer of the Consolidated Punkin Pie Company, which you chiefly own, has gone to Canada with the cash. And this here is a letter sayin' that the Hoboken Grand National Trust Company, which you lent a quarter of a million to three months ago, has busted; but they're sure they can pay seven cents on the dollar, possibly eight."

"Anything more?" says Brian with a heart-rendin' groan.

But the clerk was choked off instantly by William D. Munibagges' confidential adviser come tearin' in to announce that the stock they had put a million into, week before last, in behopes of makin' a fortune, had gone to smithereens entirely, but they could get fifty dollars for the outfit, if he sold quick. He was mighty sorry, too, to inform Brian that the ten thousand workers in their hook and eye factory had struck for double wages, half hours, and a free lunch.

"Tell the blackguards," shouted Brian, "to go to Fiddler's Green, nineteen miles beyond a hotter place!"

"No, no," says the other, "we've got to give them everything they ax, otherwise we'll not only lose our fifty million contract for hooks and eyes for the Jap Army, but likewise have to forfeit half of all you're worth in the worl' for breach of contract."

" 'Tis glad tidin's you like to bring," says Brian, speakin' with vinom of a sarpint. "Come again, and come often!"

Only the bad news had one advantage, anyhow. It mightily relieved the sufferin' in his toe, by liftin' the weight o' the pain to his heart.

And when the confidential man, divin' out o' the

room, had his stomach rammed by Mr. Munibagges' private lawyer flyin' in, Brian from the bottom of his heart prayed the divil's good cure to him.

"Mr. Munibagges," says the lawyer, spittin' pieces of the confidential man's waistcoat out of his mouth, "I've a piece of delightful news for ye."

"Thanks be to Heaven," says Brian, says he, dhrawin' a sigh of relief. "Rowl it out," says he.

"That customs case ag'in' your wife," says the lawyer, "for tryin' to smuggle in a hundred thousand dollars' worth of dresses and jew'lry, can be squared without her spendin' one hour in jail, by payin' only half a million and forfeitin' the goods likewise, which I consider dirt cheap."

Poor Brian just put a groan out o' him. His speeches had left him.

"And the newspapers promise," says the lawyer, "to stop printin' her picture and yours under the title of 'High Tariff Evangelists' if we buy a page advertisement in every Sunday issue for five years, and become life subscribers at millioneer rates—which of course we'll be delighted to do."

"Delighted, to be sure," says Brian, with a tongue that would turn cream.

"To be sure, yes," says the lawyer, "we can't

afford to have the papers ag'in' us at this critical time, when, as maybe you haven't yet heard——"

"Don't hide it from me," says Brian; "if it's as good as the rest, don't keep it from me."

"As maybe you haven't heard," went on the lawyer, "the crowner's jury who were locked up all night on the Golden Age Factory Fire inquiry this mornin' returned a verdict of willful murther ag'in' you as the most prominent of the company —though you only own twenty-five dollars' worth of shares that you took over three weeks ago in lieu of a bad debt. They found it was your bounden duty to have widened the staircase three feet, put on forty iron doors openin' out, and provide five new fire escapes."

Brian's head, when he heard this, was like a hedge-hog. "Will they hang me for it?" he wailed.

"There!" says the lawyer. "Thank Heaven we have the foreway of them! By great good luck two charges of manslaughter on behalf of the last two childer your chauffeur killed were preferred ag'in' you last night; so we have the right to object to the murther trial till you have first sarved your sentinces for the manslaughter. By that time the murther men'll be so tired waitin' that they'll only be too glad to take a plea of

guilty of murther in the fourth degree and let you off on a ten-year sentince."

"Thanks be to Heaven!" says Brian from the soles of his socks.

"And now," says the lawyer, "if you give me your blank check duly signed, I'll run round to see some of the Senators, and insense them into the ruination the Antitrust Bill will work the country if it isn't kilt quickly. Here's your doctor to see you, anyhow."

And poor Brian hadn't breath enough left to bid the lawyer good mornin', go to the divil, or any other usual civility, as he left.

"Doctor, Doctor," says Brian, says he, when his speeches returned to him, "I'm glad you've come! If you banish this pain that's worse ten thousand times than Purgatory out of my big toe, ye can name any fee your conscience'll countenance, not exceedin' your own weight in goold."

The doctor he shook his head. "Mr. Munibagges," says he, "if I was blissed with the gift, never yet known to mortal man, of curin' the gout, even the Fat Man's weight in goold at the dime museum wouldn't give me one-tenth as much delight as would the relievin' a poor tortured human of the agonies you, poor divil, have suffered for fifteen years gone, and, unfortunately, must suffer for the remainder of your natural life."

Brian, at this news let a screech out o' him. And "Wurra, wurra, wurra!" says he, wringin' his hands. "Can nothin' be done for me at all, at all?"

"Oh, yes, yes," says the doctor, says he, very reassurin', "a great deal can be done, I'm delighted to say, to relieve your other complaints."

Poor Brian put out of him a groan that would tear a hole through a hardwood door. "What, in the name of Heaven, do you mane?" says he.

"I mane," says the doctor, says he, "that exceptin' your liver, which is of course past curin', and your disaised heart, which I daren't tinker with any more, on my peril and yours, I feel sartain that after your appendix is removed, if you survive the operation, which is quite possible, you're likely to live the remainder of your life; on condition, however, that you walk ten miles on the empty stomach every mornin', take eleven gooseberries for breakfast, go without lunch, and eat no dinner, and drink seven quarts of whey between meals, and three-quarters of a bottle of codliver oil for a night-cap, and never look at tobacco more. Then," says he, "then, presumin' your heart holds out, and your liver acts like a gentleman, you'll be the soundest and healthiest millioneer outside a sanatorium.—A thousand dollars," says the doctor, flypin' his flipper for his

daily fee.—"And good mornin'," says he when he got it, "and I hope you'll have a glad an' joysome day."

Poor Brian was puttin' out of him a moan that would melt the heart of a rock, when his wife, Kitty, so plastered with jew'lry that he couldn't see more than her nose at one time, tore in, in a rantin' rage, and went whirlin' round the room like a Red Indian.

"Kitty, Kitty, *asthore,*" says Brian, says he, "what's come over ye at all, at all?"

"I have put my case," says she, "in the hands of a lawyer."

"What case, Kitty, *achree?*" says he, in mighty wonderment.

"For separation and seven hundred thousand alimony," says she. "It isn't once, and it isn't fifty times alone," says she, "ye bald headed oul' desaiver, that I've warned you to stop your gallivantin' with chorus girls! But it was the divil a morsel o' use," says she. "The ould fool is ever an' always the worst fool."

"Kitty! Kitty! Kitty!" says Brian, says he. "Is it take laive of your senses ye have done? What are ye ravin about chorus girls?"

"I'll let ye know that in the divorce coort," says she. "I have every particular of your goin's on—day and date, chapture and verse for each, lunches

and dinners, suppers and automobiles, with the chorus hussies, and a yard high of love letters smellin' like an explosion in a scent factory. The papers," says she, " 'll make fine readin' for the town some mornin' soon. One'd think," says she, "that an ould bald ruin like you, with one foot in the grave and the other only half out of it, would be makin' your soul, instead of such scandalous goin's on. 'Tis little wonder," says she, "that the divil's torturin' the soul out o' you with the gout here,—a very small earnest of the preparation he's makin' for you hereafter."

"Kitty, Kitty o' me heart," Brian pleaded with her, "what's come over ye, anyhow—for to even mention such goin's on to your own husband who's been faithful as the floodtide to you, for forty years?"

But Kitty, in a blaze o' wrath, had swept out o' the room, with the salute that she'd never spend another night under his roof. And Brian, in the pain that took hold of his heart for thinkin' what had come over Kitty, who'd been the light of his life, near a'most forgot his gout altogether, for five minutes.

"Pity look down on me!" says he. "Isn't it the sad case I am entirely?"

"There's nothing so bad, Sir," says the head flunky, says he, bowin' and tryin' to comfort him,

"but it might be a hundred times worse.—Here's a tilligram," says he, "from your son, Tom, to say he's married a showgirl."

"Me son Tom?" Brian shouts.

"Your son Tom, sure enough," says the flunky. "He's wired from Philadelphy, askin' your blissin'."

"And there's a policeman just come to the door," says another flunky, "to report that your daughter's run away with the new chauffeur."

Faith, the gout, bad as it was, couldn't keep him from jumpin' on his feet, and chasin' his tail like a crazy one round and round the room, makin' a scatteration on everything and everybody come in his way, tryin' to tear the hair that should be on his head, but wasn't, and cryin' out, "Kitty, me heart, wantin' alimony to laive me! Tom gone off with a showgirl! And Peggy run away with a hoodlum! Ochone, ochone for the happy days, forever gone, when we were blissed with poverty!"

A ruction that rose in Fif' Avnoo that instant drew his attention, and, dashin' to the window to find the cause, lo and behold ye, what did he witness, but his old self, Brian O'Gaffeney, in his old suit of laborin' clothes, mounted on the tail end of a wagon in front of his mansion, in the middle of a mob of socialists and arnychists, de-

nouncin' all millioneers, and William L. Munibagges first and foremost among them, and encouragin' the riotous mob to smash into his house, and divide the wealth they'd get there?

A roar went up that should rattle the stars, from that riotous mob the minute they beheld him at the window. But, for fear Brian O'Gaffeney would get away, he raised his voice above the roar and yelled, "A hundred thousand dollars to the arnychist who holds that red headed chap on the tail end of the wagon till I get into him; for he's me by rights, and I am not meself at all!"

But that instant, seein' an arnychist, who looked as if he washed his face every Christmas, raisin' a bomb to hurl at him, he screeched like a *pooka,* and turned tail to run. He was too late, though; for the bomb hit him a *polthogue* behind, that made him bawl like a bull and bounce fifteen yards into the air.

And when he flopped down, feelin' in his soul that he was surely a dead man, it dumbfoundhered him to hear a voice above him swearin', "Bad luck to ye, ye spalpeen! Sleepin' on the Park grass ag'in'—and yellin' like a rhinoceros! By me faith, you'll foot it to the coort this time!"

And Brian, sittin' up with a jerk and findin' himself in his own shape sittin' on the Fairy Knowe with Park Policeman McGurk ragin' above

him and raisin' his foot to give him another kick in the same place, went near a'most crazy with joy! And McGurk thought it was defyin' himself and the law he was when Brian from the bottom of his heart said, "Any sintince ye get me, short o' hangin', 'll be joy eternal. Imprisonment for life," says he, " 'll be like a holiday at Coney!"

He could only find fifty cents in his pocket; but he mollified McGurk with that. "And," says he, "I wish to Heaven it was fifty thousand! And in troth," says he, "if you'd have come on the scene five minutes sooner, I could 'a' given you fifty thousand as aisy as kiss me hand."

When Brian, as happy as a hare in harvest, reached home, he found ready for him a meal that would water the mouth of a dead man; for the bate of Kitty as a cook wasn't to be met with in many a mile. And Brian saited Kitty to one side of him at the table, and Peggy to the other, and his brave son Tom forninst him, and to the family's flabbergastin' he sayed a grace that was like a high mass. And "Kitty," says he, as they ate dinner, "go down town to-morrow mornin' and buy yourself a pair of the best and dearest dresses that money can purchase; for, a faithful wife you've been to me; and such rare quality should be rewarded. You'd better take Peggy with you," says he, "and buy her a weddin' dress. Let it be

a gorgus one," says he, "that'll do credit to the daicent boy in her own sp'ere of life who she's going to marry. Mike Corrigan is a credit to all truckmen," says he.

And the eyes of both women were as big as saucers.

"And Tom," says Brian, says he, across the table to his son, "you ought to hire a rig at Martin O'Leary's livery and give that sweet little O'Keefe girl an evenin' outin' that'll do her heart good. I'm thinkin', Tom, if you want a good wife, you might aisy go farther and fare worse than Elly O'Keefe. Her people's well come home," says he. "A daicenter man than her grandfather never entered the fair o' Mullingar."

If all this surprised them, it was dumbfoundered out an' out his wife was when he squeezed her hand underneath the table and whispered to her, "Kitty dear, promise you'll never laive me, nor look for alimony. And for my part," says he, "I'll swear never to go within acres of any show where they keep chorus girls."

But he went past their comprehension altogether when, at the dinner's close, he prayed, by way of grace, "Thanks be to God for makin' us all poor, and happy, and hardworkin' people."

Yet from the bottom o' their hearts, they all said, "Amen!"

X

MRS. CARNEY'S SEALSKIN

MRS. CARNEY was just setting the black porringer on the fire, to prepare a bowl of tea for Rody, who was busy putting in his first 'taties in the Nor'-east Park—just a call above the house. Rody always relished for his breakfast a good bowl of strong tea, black as murder, and as strong as the shafts of a cart; he acknowledged that such a drop always warmed the cockles of his heart in the morning. She had three lovely fresh-laid eggs sitting by the fireside, waiting to be popped into the boiling kettle the moment Rody would come in; and on the white table she had two plates piled high one with hard bread, well covered with yellow butter; and the other with steaming hot scones, just fresh from the fire, the melting butter running over them, and soaking through them. But the black porringer, as I said, was just going down upon the coals when the door was darkened by none other but Barney Brian; and Barney, of the light purse, and lighter heart, stepped in with "God save ye,

Mrs. Carney, and prosper the work. An' isn't this the glorious mornin' we're havin', anyhow—thanks be to God for it?"

"Thank God, an' you, Barney Brian, for His good works an' your good wishes. It's welcome ye are, Barney; draw up and have a sait by the fire, an' let me hear what's the news with ye this mornin'."

At a glance the roguish eye of Barney took in all the good things that were to the fore, including the hot buttered scones, the scent of which had arrested his steps on the road, and drawn them over Mrs. Carney's threshold. He thanked Mrs. Carney, and took the seat which she had drawn up and politely wiped with her apron for him—wiped, although, like the other articles of kitchen furniture, it was scoured so white and clean that, as Barney remarked, "The Queen o' Spain might take her tay off it."

"The sorra much news is thravelin', ma'am," said Barney—"barrin', of course, about the comin' home of Yankee M'Groary, of Dhrimullin Upper, which to be sure you have heard of?"

"I didn't hear of it," said Mrs. Carney; "but in throth myself knew it; and I said to Rody yesterday evening, when he came in for his stirabout, that I had seen Sally M'Groary's wee Johnnie going past in a hurry, and coming back again in

a bigger hurry still half an hour after (and he was by an' out of sight afore I had time to bless myself, let alone stop him an' question him), with something the size of a bottle of whisky rolled up in a handkerchief under his arm; an' I said to Rody either wee Johnnie's uncle Dan had come home, or else there was someone dead with them, above in Dhrimullin."

"Ma'am," said Barney, "you always were a close observer." With the tail of one eye Barney took in the buttered piles which, upon the table, were sending forth grateful smell, while his other eye wandered from the three fresh eggs upon the table to the black porringer bubbling and steaming upon the fire. "And," said Barney, then, "wasn't it just downright kind and thoughtful of your daughter Mary?"

"What do you mean?" said Mrs. Carney, suddenly ceasing from fixing the fire, and looking up into Barney's face.

"I mean," says Barney, says he, "wasn't it downright kind and thoughtful of her to send you such a lovely present?"

"Make me sensible, Barney," says Mrs. Carney, eagerly straightening herself up.

"Then," said Barney, "is it that you haven't heard the good news?"

"The sorra word of news, good, bad, or indifferent, has reached me," said Mrs. Carney.

"Well, well, well," said Barney, "I'm surprised! But it's pleased and proud I am, at the same time, to know that it's myself is the bearer of the good tidings. Your daughter, Mary, in Philadelphy, has sent you home, with Yankee M'Groary, the loveliest sealskin jacket that ever the gaze of mortial man rested upon!"

Mrs. Carney turned up her eyes in ecstasy, and she clasped her hands, and said: "Glory be, Barney," said she. And then, "Is it the truth you're tellin' me?"

"Arrah," said Barney, "sure I thought the worl' knew it! There wasn't a man, woman, or child, about Dhrimullin Upper—or the next land to it —that didn't keep Yankee M'Groary all yesterday evening as busy as a nailor, opening and closing his Yankee trunk, and exhibiting to them the beautiful sealskin jacket that your daughter Mary sent you."

"God's blessin' be about her, ever," said Mrs. Carney, rising to her feet; "but she was always the good, kind girl, and the kindly daughter to me. A sealskin jacket! Why, Barney," said she, "there's no reason, now, why I shouldn't be the proudest woman in Killymard. Glory be to the Man above!"

"Ma'am," said Barney, "when ye get yon jacket on ye, ye'll be too proud to say 'pratie,' an' I doubt if you'll know your neighbors when ye meet them."

For a time Mrs. Carney was lost in exaltation of spirit. She alternately clasped her hands and said, "Tchk! Tchk!" clucking her tongue in rapturous amazement.

"Barney Brian," she said then, generously, "that's not me. When I'm in that jacket, I'll know the poorest of yous, an' soul or sinner of ye will never pass me by, in it, and, after my back's turned, be able to say, 'Cock her up now! she forgets that she ever wore a plain plaid shawl!' "

"Ma'am, I wouldn't doubt your condescension," Barney admiringly acceded.

"That," said Mrs. Carney, "will be me towards every soul, and sinner of ye—barrin'," she said, on second thought, "when I pass Peggy Keaveney."

"Which," said Barney, "is not to be wondered at, at all, at all."

"I may be a bit lofty with her, I'll not deny, for she has never got over the airs she took with that beaded bonnet and flounced skirt her son John fetched her, five years ago, from Boston."

"In troth, ma'am," said Barney, "it'll be

Peggy's desarts. It'll do her a kitchen-garden of good, too, for it'll fetch her to her senses."

"A sealskin jacket!" Mrs. Carney, again ecstatically exclaimed, "But Barney, *a chara,*" she sympathetically interrupted herself, "sure it's badly off you must be for a bit of breakfast, now so far on in the mornin' as it is?"

"Oh, not at all, ma'am, not at all, ma'am," said Barney, in the polite tones of one who does not expect to be believed.

"And a bite of breakfast you must have, crathur," Mrs. Carney said, plunging the eggs into the boiling kettle, and drawing the tea, and setting down the mildly-objecting and profusely apologetic Barney to the inviting big breakfast she had prepared for her hard-working husband.

As Barney made the eggs and tea disappear, and made vast inroads on the buttered piles before him, Mrs. Carney stood over him, rattling away at the rate of a wedding and enthusing over the prospect of the new sealskin jacket. Barney, approving and replying by inclinations of the head, when the mouth was full, or by monosyllables between bites. And when Barney had almost, but not quite, finished, the door darkened again, and in walked no other than her hungry husband, Rody, with a shade of protest on his brow. When he had nodded welcome to Barney, he remon-

strated with Mollie for not calling him in to his breakfast before this, "and the stomach of me cryin' piteous," said he, "for the past half hour."

In response Mollie sought to overwhelm him with the great news of the sealskin jacket; but in Rody's hungry condition he was not to be overwhelmed.

"If you knew it, Mollie," said he, "a good, long, strong drink of tay and a couple or three eggs manes a deal more to me this minute than a web of sealskin that would reach from the morra mornin' to Jee-cago."

"Which," said Mollie, tartly, and with an air of superior knowledge, "shows the ignorance of the man, who imagines that sealskin goes by the web."

And Barney, whose mouth was too full to reply, shook his head in mingled pity and disgust over the sublime ignorance of the person, Rody.

Said Rody: "Whether sealskin goes by the web or by the creelful matters little to a ravenious man, who knows that tay goes by the bowlful, but cannot get a drop."

"Barney Brian," said Mollie, in dire despair, "did ye ever in all your existence know anything to equal that man's ignorance?"

Barney, having now finished, and left the stacks before him very small indeed, was wiping his

mouth with an air of keen satisfaction, as he replied decisively, "Never. That man's past prayin' for, Mrs. Carney."

Mrs. Carney then explained to her earthy husband that, as she gave the eggs to this poor boy, who was badly in need of his breakfast in the morning, there were none left for him, but that she would pour a second supply of boiling water on the tea leaves, and draw him a good rousing bowl of tea, "for," she said, "it's a good texture of tay, and takes a splendid grip of the second water."

Rody laid his elbows on his knees and gave a deep groan.

"And you'll maybe find as much hard bread and soda scones there as will help you pass the time till the next male-time comes, when I'll have a good dinner for you."

Rody, who was truly ravenous with hunger, raised stormy protest at this.

Mollie threw up her hands in despair, and appealed to Barney.

Barney, who was now luxuriously laid back in his chair, smacking his lips and enjoying the supreme comfort of a hearty breakfast, safely stowed away, turned reproachful eyes upon Rody, and shook his head.

"Rody," he said, with gentle rebuke, "I must

say that you are an onthankful, ongrateful man. God has blessed you with the offer of a breakfast that would make many a poor homeless craiture happy this morning if they had it.—I must say," he said, and he turned his look towards Mollie, "that you are an onappeasable man."

Then he paused to suck his teeth and smack his lips again, for the flavor of Mollie's duck eggs, which still lingered on his palate, was undoubtedly very fine. His rebuke certainly seemed to tell upon Rody, so he followed it up.

"Rody," he said, imperfectly recollecting some of Father Dan's texts, "Cursed is the man who takes heed what he shall eat or what he shall drink, or whether he has duck eggs for his breakfast. Better for him that he had a millstone round his neck and sunk to the bottom of the loch without. Consider the lilies of the field; they toil not, neither do they spin."

The force of which argument must have completely crushed the recalcitrant Rody; for he thereupon drew his chair to the table and accepted with satisfaction the second-water tea which Mollie laid down to him. He only remarked, in a calm voice.

"Barney Brian, I think your rightful occupation should have been a lily o' the field."

Barney, as he arose and took his hat, shook his

head again over this perverse man. He thanked Mollie profusely and heartily wished her good health and long life to wear and enjoy her beautiful sealskin, and received equally profuse thanks and good wishes in return. And before finally disappearing he paused in the door to look back upon the onthankful man who ate at the table, and to observe:

"Rody Carney, you shouldn't let the flesh pots of Aigypt get such a strong grip upon your soul."

Mollie was already busy washing her face and dressing her hair, and donning her best linsey-woolsey skirt and body, in hot preparation for a journey to Dhrimullin Upper.

"Rody," she said, speaking with some hairpins in her mouth, "you must fetch out that little brannet calf to the first fair of Donegal. That will be Friday next come ei' days."

"For why, ma'am?" he said, speaking as best he could, for a large mouthful which he was endeavoring to masticate.

"Because," she said, "you must buy some little dacent Sunday clothes for yourself and the childhre; when I get on this sealskin jacket I'll be ashamed of yous unless yous are dacently dressed."

"Ye will, will ye? Thank ye, ma'am," said Rody. "Thin, if your sealskin's going to make you

ashamed of your own man and your own childre, I would advise ye that the best place to wear it is, not on your own back, but at the bottom of the clothes chist."

Said Mrs. Carney, ignoring the remark, all confident of her own dictatorial powers:

"You'll get the makin's of a pair of trousers and a waistcoat, for yourself, of good broadcloth. I'll have your Sunday coat dyed and it'll be better than new. And ye'll buy the makin's of two good little suits for Micky and Johnny, and there'll be as much over as will buy a dacent skirt for me. The calf will fetch you three poun' ten, or four poun'."

"An'," said Rody, "if we're goin' to put the little calf on our backs for to make us look grand, what's goin' to pay the rent for us at Hallow-day, I'd like to know?"

Mrs. Carney said:

"God'll pay the rent for us, Rody Carney."

"I don't deny," said Rody, "that He'll appreciate the compliment; but still I have an idea that if we can struggle to raise the rent ourselves, we'll have the satisfaction of being under no favors."

"Rody Carney," Mollie said, "you're a parvarse man."

"Troth, and if I am," said Rody, "I could reach a rod this minute to them that smit me."

But Mollie, enjoying the prospect of her sealskin, for once in her life could easily afford to let him have the last word.

"Now," she said, when she was dressed and decked to her heart's content, "I'm off to Dhrimullin Upper, and I'll be back in time to get you a pick of dinner."

"Thank you," said Rody obsequiously.

"And, please God, I'll have the sealskin home with me again afore ye come back from the tatie field.—Rody, you'll give the calf a nice, good, warm, white drink, for we must get it into fine condition again' Donegal fair day."

Then she was off.

Rody heaved a sigh as he finished his scanty breakfast, and he said to himself, "God help us! To make room for that sealskin we must empty our house out, and part with all our belongin's. And God help you for a foolish woman, Mollie Carney!" He shook his head in the direction of the door through which she had disappeared. Then, in meek obedience, he prepared the warm, white drink for the calf, which himself and the children would be compelled to put on their backs to match Mollie's sealskin, and he afterwards went forth to his spade and his meditation in the nor'-east park.

Mollie struck a bee-line over Esker Hill for

Dhrimullin Upper. But, for all her haste, she couldn't avoid the temptation of dropping in to see several cronies on the way—cronies who, before ever she informed them of the good news, knew that there was something great in the wind, since Mollie Carney was carrying her head so high in the morning. Mollie overwhelmed them with the startling intelligence of the wonderful sealskin which her daughter Mary had sent home to her from Philadelphy with Yankee M'Groary. Their eyes dilated, and their mouths watered; but, for all, they heartily wished her health and joy to wear it. And each of them remarked, "Well, Mollie Carney, you'll be too proud to know any of us now if you met us in the stirabout pot."

"Is it me proud?" Mollie would say, "I'll be as plain as if I was still only one of yourselves."

"Musha more power to ye, an' God bless ye, Mollie Carney," they would reply.

It was from Peggy Keaveney only—she of the beaded bonnet and flounced skirt, from Boston—that, as Mrs. Carney expected, and, indeed, wished, she got no sympathy.

"Do you know, Mrs. Carney," Peggy said confidentially, as soon as she had recovered from the shock which the intelligence gave her, "I thought your daughter Mary was a sensible girl, and

might have sent you a sensible present. She might have known very well that you, at your age——"

"I beg your pardon, ma'am! I beg your pardon, Peggy!" snapped Mrs. Carney.

"Well," replied Peggy apologetically, "you know very well, Mrs. Carney, that there's neither of us as young as we used to be.—That at your age, I was saying, you are too sensible and too right-minded a woman to go gallivantin' in a sealskin."

"Peggy," said Mrs. Carney, haughtily, "I cannot see why a sealskin wouldn't look as becoming on me as it would on the Lord Lieutenant's wife."

"Well, ye know," Peggy insinuated, "consider you walking to the chapel in your sealskin and your dacent man, Rody, walking beside you in patched corduroys. It's as a friend I speak to ye, Mollie Carney, and it's as a friend that I wouldn't wish to see the parish pass onbecoming remarks on ye."

"Peggy," Mollie triumphantly replied, "make your mind aisy; Rody is going to the town tomorrow mornin' to leave his measure for a pair of broadcloth trousers, and a waistcoat to match, and the childre is both gettin' new shoots, from the crown of their heads down."

"Oh, indeed!" said Peggy Keaveney.—"Be

sides," Peggy continued, after a pause, "of course you have heard that sealskin jackets has got as common as cabbages in America, and as cheap; an' no lady of means and respectability durst be seen in one!"

Mrs. Carney's head went up. "Peggy Keaveney," she said, "if that's all that's troublin' your conscience, don't let it worry you any more. Take my word for it, no one is goin' to force a sealskin on you."

"So well they mightn't, Mrs. Carney," said Peggy, "for they'd have their trouble for their pains."

"Peggy Keaveney," said Mrs. Carney, rising and assuming a patronizing tone, "I'll be wishin' you a good-mornin'."

"Good-mornin', an' good luck," Peggy replied exasperatingly.

When she reached Sally M'Groary's, in Dhrimullin Upper, she was glad and proud to greet Yankee Dan himself on the door step. Taking his hands in both of hers she wrung it right heartily, wishing him a hundred thousand welcomes back to old Ireland.

Dan, in his own charming Yankee accent, thanked her, and, in return, bade her welcome to his "locality." "I guess," he said, "Mrs. Carney,

that you have come to get that sealskin jacket—ain't that so?"

Mrs. Carney, almost blushing with mixed delight and confusion, yet knowing what true politeness required, replied, "I came to see yourself, Mr. M'Groary, and to bid ye welcome, an' to thank you for your extraordinary kindness in fetching the jacket over the sea, and to fetch it home with me, if it be pleasin' to you."

Yankee M'Groary replied, "I guess it was Barney Brian who carried the good news to you?"

"It was Barney—God bless him!" Mrs. Carney replied.

"I calculated so," said Yankee M'Groary, "I can't just now recollect whether you are the tenth lady or the eleventh (for I'm beginning to lose the reckoning) that the scoundrel has sent to me for that jacket this morning. But if you will kindly step within," he said, "you can count them for yourself. It's they that are risin' the mortal hubbub that you hear within.

"With the best of intentions, Mrs. Carney," he added, "I couldn't supply all of you if I owned a private sealskinnery."

XI

THE CAPTURE OF NELLY CARRIBIN

PATRICK MELLY was a good boy. There is no gainsaying that.

The farm he inherited from his father was one of the best in Donegal; that was not to be denied, either. It would make a fine "sittin'-down" for any prudent young woman. And Patrick was a brave, big, fine-looking fellow, worthy the best woman in the three parishes.

He was big-hearted and soft-hearted, was Patrick; simple-hearted, too, as a child, and shy—very shy for a young man of six-and-twenty. All the world was aware that Patrick had courted Nelly Carribin (in his mind, of course) for six years gone. He had never in all that time said a word or looked a look meant to signify his appreciation of Nelly. It was the words he did not say and the looks he did not look that convicted Patrick, and it was because he strove so hard to hide it that he made it all so obvious—to Nelly herself, not less than to an amused but sympathetic, heartily sympathetic, world.

Now, Nelly was a worthy girl, with an average share of good looks, and, what was perhaps more needful to Patrick, more than an average share of worldly wisdom. She looked with favor upon Patrick because she knew he was a very good boy who owned a good farm, and for the six years that Patrick courted her in imagination she, acting a maidenly part, set shyness against shyness till the parish named them: the most "distanate courtiers" known to local history. But half a dozen years of this kind of courting by imagination at length palled upon Nelly, and she observed that Patrick was as shy now, and as wide of the mark, as on the first day she had detected him. So it behooved her to take matters in her own hands—so far, that is, as she might do so without compromising her womanliness. And where there's a will —especially if it be a woman's—there's sure enough a way.

One day little Jaimsy Kerrigan conveyed to Patrick Melly Mrs. Carribin's request that he might step over to her house when he had finished his work that evening, to arrange for the carting home of her corn. So Patrick found himself, an hour after night had fallen, with his heart in his mouth, lifting the latch of the Widow Carribin's door.

"Patrick Melly, in the name of all that's won-

derful, is it you that's in it?" Nelly Carribin, nursing her knitting under an arm, was with her apron politely wiping her own chair, and setting it for him on a clean and cheery hearth in front of a blazing fire. "Musha, Patrick,"—giving it a final wipe after she had properly settled it for him,—"it's welcome ye are—though you *are* a sight for sore eyes. Sit down there and take a gleed o' the fire."

Patrick, whose face was very red,—maybe from the reflection of the blaze,—did not raise his eyes to Nelly's as he effusively thanked her. He laid his hand hesitatingly on the chair-back, but did not seat himself. He said:

"I came to see—Nelly, I've come to see—to see——"

"My mother," Nelly said with the very remotest flavor of asperity in her tone. "I know very well you have, Patrick. She hasn't got aise nor paice for ten days gone, talking of her corn that she wants in; so I told her thi' day to send for you at once, an' settle, an' be done with it. Won't you sit down, Patrick Melly?"

"Isn't your mother in, then?" said Patrick, with the tone and manner of one who was ready to make a run for the door if the answer shouldn't be satisfactory.

"She's not," Nelly said curtly; "but even so, I'll guarantee that the chair 'on't bite ye."

Patrick hastily dropped into the chair. Then Nelly, with a sigh, took her seat by the side of the hearth as far from Patrick as maidenly prompting and hospitality would permit. She had her knitting on her knee, and was working away industriously as soon as she sat down. Taking it in with the tail of his eye, Patrick mentally admired the industry that prompted this girl not to waste one valuable moment. "Och," he thought, "Nelly Carribin would be a treasure in a king's chimley corner."

"Yes," Nelly said, without lifting an eye from her work—"yes—me mother got a message half an hour ago to go for to see Nancy Sheeran of Cruckmore, who was tuk sudden with bad pleurisy this mornin'. The minute you come in I was just wishin' you wouldn't come for an hour yet, beca'se my mother would be back then."

"Sure—sure—sure—I'll—I'll——" Patrick began stammering as he laid a hand on his chair to raise himself out of it.

"You'll what?" said Nelly, staying her needles and looking at him sharply. "Do you think I'm afeard o' ye?" she added scornfully.

"Oh, no; oh, no," said Patrick, and subsided.

As she resigned herself to her knitting again,

she casually remarked: "Not, indeed, but that I should be, if I took warning from all the stories I do be hearin' of how you act yourself, Patrick, when there's a good-lookin' girl in question."

Patrick's spirits were lifted immediately. The great ambition of his heart was that, without throwing on him the onus of practical proof, Nelly should believe him to be a daredevil fellow among the girls.

"Nelly," said Patrick, in a brilliant burst of wit, "you shouldn't believe half the lies that's goin' among the gossips."

"Never mind," said Nelly; "I can sometimes see as far through a millstone as the man that picked it, and I know well the slyness of you boys, who make believe butter wouldn't melt in your mouths."

"Nelly," Patrick said, feeling a wonderful access of courage under these coveted allegations, "I'm not of the sort of the other boys, and don't think it."

"Kind father to you," said Nelly, "for crediting the rest of them so far!" The wit of this was too deep for Patrick. Nelly added after a moment: "That is your notorious modesty, though. I believe in my heart that you're not a great deal worse than most of them."

Patrick was a bit nonplused; his courage was

inclined to ebb. "Do you think will your mother soon be in, Nelly?" he said.

"She may walk in any mortial minute," Nelly said warningly; "so you had better keep your good behavior."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Patrick. "Don't be afeard o' me, Nelly," he said, with marvelous generosity.

"Neither I am afeard o' ye," said Nelly, with bravery. And she added, encouragingly, "I'm sure it'll be very little more nor an hour till me mother's home."

At this information silence suddenly fell upon Patrick. Nelly took no notice of it. She said, after an industrious plying of her needles, "My mother is a botheration to you, Patrick, every time she ever wants anything done."

"Don't say it, Nelly," Patrick said in all sincerity.

"I say it, and I will say it," said Nelly, "for I know it. I wish," she added with a sigh, "that we had a man fixed about the house, anyway."

Patrick bravely said, "Ay, Nelly, ay; I wish you had."

"It is why," said Nelly, "I often beg of my mother to marry again."

Patrick coughed.

"Don't you think she should?" Nelly innocently queried.

"I—I—I—I mean to say, of course, she should," Patrick got out.

Nelly lifted her eyes from her work. Patrick's eyes were on the ground. She flashed an angry glance at the stupid fellow.

After some moments she resumed in quizzing tone: "Talkin' of marryin', I hear, Patrick, that they do be busy makin' matches for yourself lately."

"No, do they?" said Patrick, interestedly.

"Ay, do they!" said Nelly. "An' you look well purtendin' to know nothin' of it."

"As sure as there's powder in Derry, Nelly, I'm on the first ground I heard of it."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Nelly. "Simple Simey, ha! ha! ha! ha!"

"In troth, Nelly," Patrick said, "I never heard a word of it." Then he looked at her meaningly. "Who do they be matching me on, Nelly, *a stor?*"

"You don't know, I suppose?"

"The devil a bit o' me!" he replied, with an encouraging smile.

"Why," said Nelly, bending over her work, "you know very well that they do be matchin' ye on Mary Roarty of the Long Bog."

Patrick waxed hotly indignant at such slander.

Nelly bent farther over her work, so that her face was quite invisible to Patrick. When he seemed almost to have expended his indignation Nelly said, "And they do be matchin' you on Sally McCready of Altmore." This set Patrick off again. "An' likewise," Nelly added after a little, "on Annie Mary Malone of the Back o' the Hill."

"It's a lie," Patrick said. And then he apologized for his rudeness, explaining that he had been so guilty only under exceptional stress of temper. Nelly's countenance, bent well over her knitting, was still invisible to him.

"Ah, sure," she said at length, when Patrick's indignant asseverations and denials seemed nigh exhausted—"Ah, sure," she said, "that's the way with all you men—br'akin' hearts as if they were bits of delf, an' either forgettin' or denyin' it the next day after."

"It's not the way with me, Nelly," said Patrick, chivalrously, and he felt very proud of himself to impress Nelly that though he might, if he chose to be cruel, amuse himself crumbling the hearts of the girls, he had a soul that rose above it. "No, 'tis not the way with me."

Nelly knitted away thriftily. Her head was still bent. "Ay, oh, to be sure you will say so. All of ye say that. They do be tellin' me, Pat-

rick—now, when you dhrive me to it—that ye have a girl in every airt ever the wind blew from."

Patrick was glad that Nelly's eyes were too low to detect the play of pleased feeling which lighted up his countenance.

"Arrah, Nelly," he said, "why do you *even* the likes o' that to me?"

"It's not me that's evenin' it at all, at all, to ye. Sure, it's the parish talk."

"Then the parish talk is tellin' lies on me."

"Poor fellow! they ought to be ashamed of themselves."

"Now, Nelly, you don't believe me?"

"I'd be long loath to believe the likes of ye, ye common desaiver."

"Well, well, well!" he said, with happy resignation.

"Do you know," said Nelly, "when you put your hand on the latch the night, I just guessed it was you was in it, an' I'd have had the door barred on ye, only ye were in on me too quick."

"Bar the door on me! An' for why, Nelly *a stor?*"

"That's the why."

"What's the why?"

"That's the why. It's on everyone's tongue the bad habits ye have of kissin' the girls."

"Oh, Nelly! Oh, Nelly!"

"An' do you see them tongs there? Do you see them tongs?" thrusting them under his nose, the more emphatically to fix his attention on the article specified. "When I found you were too quick for me to have the door barred, I put me hand on them tongs, and says I to meself, 'the vagabone 'ill not have it all his own way, in troth, if he tries for to kiss me.'—Do you hear that?" But it was plain to the most undiscerning that under Nelly's brave outward show there was lurking dire alarm. "Och," she said, "I wish my mother was home!"

A radiant smile was lighting up Patrick's countenance. He was surely a wonderful fellow among the girls.

He made great manifestation of moving his chair in the direction of Nelly; in fact, with three hitches, he got it forward to the extent of half an inch. Hereupon Nelly sat up in alarm, and brandishing the tongs said:

"Don't dar, Patrick Melly! I'll malavogue ye, if you come another inch."

"Do you think me a coward?" Patrick said right dauntlessly.

"No matter whether or no. Keep your distance; for I don't want to hurt ye. Sit as ye are now. I don't want no truck with the likes of a boy like you—who has a rag on every bush."

Patrick, now vastly pleased, hereupon crossed his legs and folded his arms, and expatiated upon young men being young men, and being allowed to have their little frivolities, which, after all, signified but little. Even if, he granted, he had been a trifle light-headed in the past, and more than ordinarily a bit of a flirt, courting to a great extent merely for the fun of it, he had now, he said, decisively made up his mind to reduce himself to one girl, and court her not for fun, but in real earnest.

"Oh," Nelly said, "an' who'll she be, Patrick?"

Patrick, instead of replying, turned his eyes upon Nelly. After a little while, under constraint, Nelly lifted her eyes from her work, and met Patrick's full upon her.

"I was saying, 'Who'll she be?' Patrick," said Nelly, as if she had just loked up for the purpose of repeating the question.

"Nelly," said Patrick, very cautiously hitching his chair still nearer to her, "can you guess who she is?"

"I'm sure I can't for the life o' me."

"I'll give you three guesses, Nelly," and the chair moved a bit nearer.

"Oh, then," Nelly said confidently, "I'll name her in three guesses."

"Good!" said Patrick, slapping his leg.

But though Nelly deliberated deep before each guess, she failed lamentably to name the girl in three namings. "Then I give it up," she said in despair.

"Try again; I'll give you another three guesses." And with another hitch Patrick's chair had got dangerously close to the chair of Nelly, who was too much preoccupied to be aware of her danger.

"There isn't a bit of use. I surely thought it was one or other o' them three. Tell me who is she, Patrick, that you intend coortin'?"

"Well, if I must tell ye, I can only whisper it in your ear."

"Aisy with ye now, an' give over your foolin', Patrick Melly. Where *is* them tongs?"

But Patrick had caught her ear's attention, and he whispered something softly into it.

"Patrick, Patrick Melly," she said loud in alarm, "if you don't give over that foolin', I'll cry!"

And instantly, without giving him time to benefit by her warning, poor Nelly began to weep.

"Nelly *a stor,*" said Patrick, appealingly, and involuntarily his arm stole around her even without Nelly's becoming aware of it—"Nelly, Nelly *a stor,* won't you forgive me? But sure I couldn't

help speakin' the truth that has been for a long, long time lyin' like a millstone on me mind."

In surprise and astonishment at such a disclosure, looking up through her tears, Nelly exclaimed, "Aren't ye or not ashamed of yourself, to take a hand at a poor lonely girl?"

"Nelly, Nelly, my heart, I tell ye I've been dyin' for ye for five years."

"Ah, Patrick, do ye railly mane to tell me that's so?" And then she wept again as Patrick soothingly assured her that it was.

"Who'd ever have thought it?" she said between sobs.

"No," Patrick said, "you never would have thought it. No one ever could have thought it—beca'se, ye see, I was so deep that I never betrayed the smallest little sign of it. But, Nelly, *a gra,* it was there all the same."

"Well, well, well, who'd ever have thought it! Who'd ever have thought it! Och, Patrick, Patrick, Patrick, but you are the wonderful close fellow to hold that on your mind all this long time, an' never show trace, track, or sign of it!"

"Nelly," said Patrick, "you were talkin' a little while ago of having a man about the house."

"Ay, indeed." Nelly blushed. Then she said: "So I was. I think me mother might very well marry. Won't ye help me to persuade her, Pat-

rick?" And poor Patrick's countenance, which had been fast brightening, suddenly fell.

"Nelly," he said after a pause, during which Nelly had been working with wonderful industry, "there's more ways of coaxin' a man about the house than marryin' your mother on him."

"Indeed, is there, Patrick?"

"Ye-ye-yes." Then Patrick lost his speech.

After Nelly had waited in vain for him to find it again, it suddenly dawned on her: "Oh, you mean, Patrick, for us to get a hired man? Ah, but we can't afford that at all, at all, you know."

"No, no, no," Patrick said; "I wasn't thinkin' of a hired man."

Nelly stopped her needles, leaned her elbow on her knee, and scrutinized the blaze, as if she were trying to read from it the solution of a very knotty problem.

Patrick took his courage in both hands, leaned over, and said in her ear, "Nelly, I mane myself."

Nelly gave a great start, and said in alarm, "Oh, Patrick!"

The knitting dropped from her hands, both of which went up, as the hands of an alarmed person will, and then by awkward accident fell (of all places in the world) into Patrick's hands, which were slightly advanced toward her. They were

instantly imprisoned, and Patrick said, "Well, Nelly, what do you say?"

"Och, och," she gasped, in still wilder alarm, "sure, I don't know what to say at all, at all! Patrick, ye have taken the breath from me. Sure, I never dreamed of such a thing."

"Sure, I know you didn't, Nelly."

"Sure, I never meant to marry at all, at all, but, Patrick,"—turning reproachful eyes upon him—"you are such a divil—an' have such a way with ye,—that—that—och, don't ax me!"

"But," he said, resolutely, "I *will* ax ye, and I dar' ye to refuse."

"Och, I would like to refuse you—if I could, Patrick; that is—but—but—but—Och, bad cess to my mother! What drove her out the night anyway?"

"Come, Nelly," he urged encouragingly.

"Och, Patrick, this is neither manly nor fair of ye. Sure, I haven't any backin' at all—and—I suppose—I must—must—say yes—an'—bad 'cess to my mother!"

XII

THE BELLMAN OF CARRICK

CARRICK would soon have to look out for a new bellman who, followed by a tail of smear-faced children, would clang his handbell up and down the few crooked streets of the village; and in the market-square, with great voice, cry its momentous announcements. Very soon it would have to look out for such another one; for Dinis Lafferty was dying.

Carrick was still primitive enough to despise doctors, and the fanciful ailments in whose wake they invariably follow, or vice versa. When, after a prolonged and pleasant pilgrimage, a Carrickman found Death come plucking at his latch-string, he just stretched himself on his bed (for appearance sake), and died at his own ease. Dinis was even now reconciling himself to answer the Call. He had a load of his death on him. Had a doctor been suffered in Carrick, he would have probably misnamed it a load of fever; but the knowledgeable old neighbor-women, who were called in to shake their heads over him, put it in

the former, simpler shape. And Dinis agreed with them.

On this afternoon little thirteen-year-old Bridget Clancy was the attendant on the dying bellman, in his one-roomed thatched cabin—of the humble row that tailed off at the end of the main street. It was a bright, warm May morning; and Bridget could not resist the frequent temptation to peep out of the little window—temptation all the sorer since it was fair-day in Carrick—a great day! whose sights and sounds, and flow of gay life, always stirred the hearts of the youngsters. "I dunno will the Men soon be here?" Bridget at length remarked, half to herself.

"What Men?" the patient queried in a languid enough kind of way.

"Why, the men from *Bla Cliath*—the men from Dublin."

"The men from *Bla Cliath?*" Dinis was now interested.

"Ay; them that's comin' the day to tell us to speak our own Irish again."

"What's that?" To Bridget's consternation the dying man was on his elbow. "What's that?"

Bridget said, "Dinis, darlin', 'on't you lie down?"

"Tell me what you're ravin' about?" Dinis commanded irritably.

"I'm ravin' about nothin' at all, at all.—Sure, Father Tom told us off the altar, last Sunday, about them comin' here thi' day, he said, to make the people begin speakin' again their own beautiful tongue."

Bridget was frightened by the fierce way Dinis stared at her. To her great relief he spoke at length—softly too.

"Bridget, *a mhilis! a leanbh mo chroidhe!** do tell poor dyin' Dinis the truth. Is it jokin' ye are?"

"The sorra joke or joke. For why would I, sure? Wasn't I listenin' with my own two ears to Father Tom tellin' it off the altar? An' sure, weren't we all listenin' to it?"

"Glory be to God!" Dinis let himself roll back into the attitude becoming a man sick unto death —and permitted Bridget to hap him up.

He did not speak again for a good while. His heart had begun aching with a heavy ache; for his mind ran again upon a subject the most distressing his life had known. When he was a youth, getting up, the language of their own country had been good enough for everyone in Carrick; for great and small, for old and young; the shopkeeper spoke it as well as the tinker; it was the tongue of the priest, the gauger, the beggar;

* O Sweet! O child of my heart!

it was the language near to the heart of man and maid. It was the tongue of sweetness, of greatness; it was the language of the soul. The Gaelic was then in esteem; the *Beurla* (English) was only heard in a broken way—that made men laugh —from a few *bodachs*—or, on rare occasions, from a stranger who wore Sunday clothes.

But it was decided by the powers that ruled them, that the language of their hearts should be put away. So National Schools were given to them—oh, the cruel mockery of the knaves who named them National!—and the careless child who would, within the walls of these schools, let slip the language of its mother, was beaten, often till the blood came. This Irish tongue was laughed at, jeered; the children came to despise it, and jeer at it themselves—even their parents at length, began to feel ashamed of it, and to put it aside, and to make themselves ridiculous in maimed *Beurla*. Still worse, in the shabby second hand manners of the foreigner, also. In ache of heart and bitterness of spirit, Dinis had observed the deep degradation descend upon his fellow-citizens.

In one short generation, it came to pass that the mountain folk who clung to the old tongue, and to the customs of their fathers, were laughed at on the streets of Carrick!

Dinis's cup was then full. Dinis was an utterly unlearned man, and untraveled: his ignorance (as the world viewed it) was colossal. Even he granted so to himself. Nevertheless, he, *Oisin indhiadh na b-Fhian,* had some riches in his breast that travel never discovers, and schools seldom impart. At the outset he had made a bold stand against the tide of shame that threatened Carrick; but the tide overpowered Dinis, bore him down, with shouts of mockery ringing in his ears—that bitterest mockery, too, of those whose shame he had striven to fend from them. When, at length, the bellman of Carrick was compelled, standing in the market-place, to cry his announcements in the tongue which had supplanted the language of his heart, his spirit broke. The manful bellman, though yet hardly three score and ten, aged rapidly; the light left his eyes; his step lost its spring; his head was carried high, no more.

"Oh, glory be, here they're comin'! here they're comin'!"

The bellman started from his sorrowful dreaming. He was up on his elbow again—listening. Bridget's brown curls were thrust over the top of the little window. She was gazing up the street: she was talking excitedly. "Oh, Dinis, there's three—four—five—of them!—gentlemen!—gentlemen in grand shop clothes! and hard black hats!

—And a lady, too!—Oh, there's a born lady! Oh, such a grand lady!—with the gran'est new dress on her ye ever seen! Oh! oh, oh! such a dress, Dinis dear. Shower-o'-hail an' everything! and my! the hat she has! Oh, Dinis! Dinis, you'd die aisy if you'd only get wan sight o' the hat!—Here they come! Oh, here they come! They're goin' past now. Do you hear? Do you hear the cheerin', Dinis? Oh, and the gatherin' that's after them! And Father Tom himself with his staff, at the head of the gatherin'! And him walkin' young and straight again! Ah, you never seen Father Tom lookin' as bold an' brave; an' he grippin' his staff as if he wanted to be knockin' down onyone who'd say boo! Oh, Dinis! Oh, Dinis! but it's the gran', gran' sight!" Bridget now withdrew from the window.—"They're goin' to the Square for meetin' an' speechifyin' an' dancin', I'm told, an' singin'!" she said wistfully. "All in Irish! all in Irish!—Och, I wisht I was there!"

The bellman, never speaking, allowed himself to fall back on the bed again. He lay in silence for a while. Then suddenly he said, "Bridget, why don't you go?"

"Ay, but sure, Dinis, I couldn't leave ye?" Yet an expectant light was dancing in the bonny brown eyes of her.

"Tubbe sure you can, *a leanbh!* Run away *a thaisge!*"

"Oh, Dinis, Dinis, thanky!" And she clapped her hands for grateful joy. "Then I'll send in wee Mary Malley to mind ye till I come back.—I'll be no time gone."

"You'll send in no one!" Dinis spoke almost angrily. "I want no one, an' Mary Malley should be at the meetin' as well as ye. I never felt better in all me life. Be off with ye, Bridget, till ye hear them gran' Dublin folks that God sent down here to open our eyes to our disgrace.—Off with ye, *a mhilis,* fast."

Bridget needed little encouragement. She was soon gone, and had the door slammed behind her. Dinis hearkened to her footstep as, light and fast, it sped by the window. When she was well away he arose out of bed and dressed hastily—in his Sunday clothes. He took down from the hole in the wall, high up by his bed head, the faithful bell that had been his bread-winner for forty years; he brushed the dust off it affectionately, and, gripping it by the tongue, went to the door, lifted the latch, and passed out into the street.

But little of the throng and bustle of the fair extended so far up as the bellman's cottage. Away down from him he saw the sheep ranged by the

house-sides, and buyers and sellers busy among them; farther down still, he saw cattle being driven hither and thither; and he saw crowds of people everywhere—especially thronging around the public houses, where neighbor brought neighbor for a friendly glass, and seller brought buyer, for sake of luck and decency. Farther away still, he caught a glimpse of the distant Square, and of surging masses of people there assembling, and of half-a-dozen people rising up over the heads of all the rest—the *Bla Cliath* folk taking their stand on a platform he knew.

The bellman strode down the street. As he did so, astounded people, who on coming into town that day had been saddened by the sorrowful intelligence that Dinis Lafferty was dying, and had breathed a prayer for his easy passing, ran to him with joyous faces and outstretched, greeting hands. But Dinis ignored them. His gaze was ahead. He raised his bell now, and began to ring it aloud. A curious crowd closed in after him. He paused when he got amongst the denser crowds, a little way down the street, and the people circled him to hear him cry his announcement. "*A dhaoine mo chroidhe!*" he cried, "O people of my heart! this is the great news. This is the great news entirely—Ireland's day has come at last. Gentlemen and ladies—rale gentlemen and

ladies—from the big city of *Bla Cliath* have come all the way to tell us that Ireland's tongue and the tongue o' the Saints is to be spoke again in Carrick—spoke without shame or sin, *a dhaoine mo chroidhe!* O people of my heart!" And, ringing, he spread his arms abroad as if he would take them all to his bosom. "O people of the heart o' my heart! leave your sheep and your cattle, leave your pigs and your bags, leave your chafferin' and hagglin', and follow, follow, follow! to the Square, till you hear again the heavenly music of *Teanga na h-Eireann,** the sweet tongue of your fathers, that is old as the mists on the hills, and richer than all the mines of Mexy-co. Gather, gather, people o' my heart! Gather you, O princely people o' the mountains who never yet lost the tongue, nor ever reddened for shame of it. Come with me, and know your pride." Dancing in Dinis's eyes was a bright light, which had fascination for everyone who saw it.

Striding forward again, he rang out louder than before. Old Sorcha left her stocking-stand unheeded, and hastened after him. The mountain weavers left their unsold webs uncared for, and followed. Men who minded wayward pigs in the market-places handed over to unwilling youths the restraining ropes and tumbled after Dinis.

* The tongue of Ireland.

He paused in front of Neilis MacGiolla-Chiar's public-house, rang loudly, and cried his beseeching cry to the people of his heart; and the men who were there settling for cows instantly waived disputed luck-penny, pulled the drawing strings on their money-bags, and, buttoning their treasure into their vests as they came, poured helter-skelter out of doors to swell the bellman's following. He rang his way in and out through the crowds, gathering to him as he went sweet-faced old country-women in snow-white caps and many-colored kerchiefs, and gnarled and bent rheumatic old men from the hills who hobbled on sticks. These, hearing the glad tidings, came with joy—together talking glibly and loudly in the tongue that was come into regard again—the tongue they had never reneged.

And, only for these faithful old heroes and heroines had the bellman any respect to-day. The youths—the *Beurla*-jabbering creatures whom the surging throng pressed in his way—he contemptuously slung aside. His port was proud; but he beamed beatifically on the veteran heroes, and they lifted high their heads. Dinis's look plainly spake, "You, fellow-Trojans, and I, are the salt of the earth to-day." "We are, we are!" their looks shouted back. Voluntarily, somehow, was accorded to them the place of honor in the pro-

cession—right at Dinis's heels. The *Beurla*-speakers, and the *bodachs* with the new customs and the new manners and the new dress, trailed shame-facedly in the rear.

"Gather, gather, gather, O noble people! People o' my heart, gather! for Ireland's day has come!"

"A dhaoine uaisle! O noble people! the black day of the Gall is gone at last, and the bright day of the Gael—Ireland's and yours—is come! O people o' my heart, follow me! follow me!" He strode on; the people of his heart swelled the ranks behind; and, greeted by a cheer almost terrific in its vehemence, he, belling his way, led his own enthusiastic contingent into the midst of the multitude on the meeting ground.

Hundreds amongst these latter, amazed to see here the bellman whom they had lamented as dying, would have pressed forward, both to greet him and to satisfy their curiosity on the miracle of his sudden cure; but the light on Dinis Lafferty's countenance and the exalted look in his eye humbled and repressed them. So that even the most impetuous almost reverently drew back. There was a high color, too, on Dinis's cheeks that no one ever saw there before.

Dinis, mounting the platform, presented himself to the *Bla Cliath* people who were there. He

held the bell (gripped by the tongue) in his left hand, while, in spirit of true Irish courtesy, without the absurdity of introduction, he warmly shook the hands of the strangers, bidding them, in the tongue they had come to popularize, an hundred thousand welcomes to his village. His duty done as Carrick town's representative, he took the seat tendered to him beside the Dublin folk, and looked over the multitude with dignified approbation.

Then the strangers, under the presidency of Father Tom, told in warm words the great doings of these days in Dublin—of the new life which was being infused into the language which had been thought dying; how, nightly, gathered in crowded back rooms, young and old, in the great city, were ardently spelling their way through books of Gaelic; how the movement was spreading like wildfire north and south; and the language for ages banned and barred was now reaping tardy esteem in high places. On the bright faces of the hearkening mountain people joy was pictured, and for each glad fact told them they cried out with great hoarse cries of delight—at times their wild cheers startling the ruminating cattle in the far market-place.

Except for the occasional lifting of his hat in sympathy with a much-merited cheer, the bellman, listening intently to every word that dropped

from the strangers' lips, showed strange self-repression.

Though Father Tom proudly and finely and creditably directed the speech-making; yet when it was over, and the old men and women, and little toddling children, came up to compete in singing, in story-telling, and dancing, for the prizes that the Dublin folk tendered, a better man took arbitrary control. The bellman felt this was his task. Ringing his bell for attention, he announced in turn each competition. Scanning the audience he selected the proper competitors for each trial of talent, and summoned them, by name, to the platform. He granted the Dublin people the honor of suggesting the competitions and distributing the prizes. He put forward, and stood by, each essayer, singer and dancer and story-teller; encouraging, approving, censuring, or dismissing, as the case required—and awarding the prize. Father Tom ventured, a few times, to assert a Chairman's prerogatives: but Dinis, having neither time nor inclination just now, for debating society trivialities, with an impatient wave of his hand suppressed Father Tom. He had had his innings in directing the speech-making. And Dinis had not once interfered. It was now Dinis's turn—his duty he felt, rather than his privilege.

After the little children had danced, so well

that, at times, their twinkling feet hardly touched the boards; and the fair-skinned, white-haired, old women, fingering the fringes of their shawls, had crooned their haunting songs; and old men leaning on sticks, and speaking from the dangerous brink of the platform, had told their marvelous tales of Finn and Gol and Conal Cearnach and the days when there were men in Erin; a trial in oratory was announced. A blazing shining medal that made all eyes glisten, was offered for prize; and the subject given, the seductive one of *Teanga na h Eireann*—the old Tongue of Erin. Hereupon the bellman's eyes glistened anew, he listened intently, yet all but impatiently, to eloquent unlettered orators who, fired by their subject, compelled the incessant applause of the gathering. When the others had spoken, the bellman got to his feet.

Except to tell his people of an auction, Dinis Lafferty had never in his life addressed an audience, never practiced the arts of oratory, nor mastered its tricks; but he felt not now the lack. Masterful, he faced the multitude and calmly awaited the subsidence of the great roar with which it greeted him. Then he began to speak. And it was the man's soul that spoke to a spell-bound audience. From the bellman burst a torrent of eloquence. Even Father Tom was amazed.—

The *Bla Cliath* folk were astounded; the multitude overwhelmed. His face lit up, his eye blazed, and from his ready tongue, picturesque, entrancing language flowed free and fast. His hands moved easily in appropriate gesture. He swayed the great crowd as he would. They swelled with pride and tingled with shame, they were stirred with rage, soothed with love, bit with sarcasm, melted with pathos, inspired with courage, terrified with fear. His audience did not know him. They forgot he was the bellman. He forgot it himself. He was out of himself—borne away on the fierce flood of his own eloquence. And when at length he subsided into his seat and the man with the gold medal proceeded to pin it on Dinis's breast, the surging mass of men below cheered and thundered and volleyed in applause, till they ceased from exhaustion.

It was now the Rosary hour. Father Tom, his face glowing, announced that the Rosary would be this day and during all the days to come, in Carrick, recited in their own Gaelic again—after fifteen years of forgetfulness.

The great crowd surged to the chapel—filled and overflowed it—and masses knelt on the street pavement. Fervent and loud, beyond anything ever heard in that chapel before, were the responses rendered in their own tongue of music

this evening. The most fervent responses, and loudest of all, were those of Dinis Lafferty. When the devotional enthusiasm was at its climax a commotion arose. The bellman had collapsed.

He was carried out unconscious—and so to his home. It was midnight ere consciousness returned. He peered about, in the dim light of his cabin, perceived Father Tom, with anxious look seated by his bed-head—and several neighbors, silent, around the little apartment.

"How do you feel, Dinis?" Father Tom asked.

"Bravely, thank God and you, Father Tom! A bit waik maybe—but bravely, bravely.—Was I long sleepin', Father Tom?"

"Long sleeping! Ah, yes, a good while, Dinis."

Dinis was silent for some minutes. Then a smile came out and played about his lips. He said, "Father Tom, I had the most wonderful dhraim you ever heerd tell of in your born days."

"Indeed, Dinis."

"Ay, indeed." And Dinis related to his amazed audience a great dream which he had had, to the effect that the language of his heart, the tongue which had been dying, or dead, was come to life again; that great folks from the big city of *Bla Cliath* had come down even to poor Carrick to tell the joyful tidings; that all the people were assembled in the market-place to hear it; and that

the Dublin folks offered grand prizes for songs and for stories in the old tongue; and that, in particular, they offered a beautiful yellow, glistening, glittering, shining, gold medal—oh, the beautifulest the eye of man ever beheld—to the countryman who would make the finest speech in praise of the old tongue. "And I thought," said Dinis, "that I got on the platform and made a speech that astonished myself, and the likes of which was never listened to afore, and that the people cheered and cheered, and the Dublin men presented me with the medal, and stuck it, all glisterin' an' shinin', on my breast."

"But, Dinis," Father Tom said, "that wasn't a dream at all—but real fact."—"Here," said he, holding up the shining yellow badge, "here's your beautiful medal that you won."

Dinis for a moment looked at the medal with eyes widening, as in affright. Then he clutched it with both hands, pressed it to his lips and to his breast. "Father Tom," he whispered, "Father Tom, then it is all true? It's all true?"

"Every word of it, Dinis, my poor fellow. You're the hero of Ireland.—But do you know that you are dying, Dinis? It's proper for you to know it."

"Dyin' am I?"

"Shrived an' leavin' us, Dinis."

"And what are you afeerd of, Father Tom, that your voice trimbles? What matters my dyin' when, sure, the language is goin' to live?" With clasped hands he pressed the medal to his heart, and lifting up his eyes, sayed from his soul, "Glory be to God this night!"

He was silent for a few minutes. Then he spoke. "Father Tom, och, if only I could take this medal with me. When good St. Peter would bar my way at the gate askin', *'Cia thusa, a dheoraidhe?'* (Who are you, O exile?), I'd straighten myself, an' lift my head, proud-like, and answer him, *'A Thighearna ro-urraimighe, is fior-Eireannach me'* (Worshipful sir, it's a true Irishman, I am.) And when he'd naturally swither a bit about takin' my word for it, I'd thrust under his eyes that medal—*'Feuch sin, a dhuine choir!'* (Look at that, good man.)—Isn't it he'd then draw the bolt in quick time and throw wide open the gate with *'Siubhal isteach, a fhior-eireannaighe, a's cead failte romhat 'un an Fhlaithis!'* (Walk in, O true Irishman, and a hundred welcomes before you in Paradise.)—And the sound of his strong welcome would deafen all Paradise with the la—the langua—the lang——"

But the bellman of Carrick never finished the sentence in this world.

XIII

BARNEY BRIAN'S MONUMENT

BARNEY, with the rest of us, used to come and sit in Toal-a-Gallagher's of nights, and hear the latest war news from America discussed. It was when, to our pain, North and South had sprung at each other.

John Burns' weekly paper gave us the broad news of the war, and occasional American letters threw side-lights upon interesting concomitant phases.

Night by night the discussion had a deeper fascination for Barney. Barney loved a row as keenly as any man in the barony; and could acquit himself with as much credit.

"Arrah, Charlie," he would say to Charlie Dunnion, of the Bearna Dearg, when they had heard the account of the latest skirmish—"Arrah, Charlie, if me an' you had only been in the mi'st of it, with our good blackthorns in our fist, I'd a' given me wan eye, Charlie—wouldn't you? Och, och! there's divil a bit of fun at all, at all, in Ireland nowadays, an' myself's spoilin' for divarsion."

The news of the big bounties that were offered for substitutes, too, made Barney's eyes dilate with wonder. The whole thing had for him the fascination of a fairy tale. And it did not surprise us very much when, on a night that a wonderful letter from Brian Melly—Brian Micky Hude, of Lettertraina, who had just joined the Army—had been read, Barney jumped from his seat into the middle of the floor, and said: "By gum! but I'm for the war."

And he was. In less than twenty-four hours Barney Brian had his passage taken for America again, and had arranged to sail in two weeks.

There was lamentation from end to wynd of the parish. For we never knew how much we liked Barney Brian till we found he was going to leave us.

Barney, since his widowed mother died, had neither mother nor brother, chick, child, or one belonging to him. He did a day's work to this man, that one or the other; was well fed, bedded and clad, and after that snapped his fingers at the world and the devil; for "no cow, no care," was his maxim.

A reckless, rollicking, devil-may-care fellow he was, to whom life was a lilt, and the world a big joke full of fun, frolic, and fair-days. He could sing at his own wake, and dance at his own burial;

and would sooner have a fight than a feast any day, and proved by his stories that fiction was stranger than fact.

At everything that was bad, Barney was best in the parish—he was the best boxer, the best *caman* player, the best dancer, whistler, and singer, the best at cards, and the best at the blackthorn; but, to crown all, Barney's head was as full of rascally tricks, as an egg is full of meat; and there was not an individual in the parish that he had not at one time or other fooled for his own fun, and the enjoyment of everyone.

There was lament, I say, from end to wynd of the parish. The tear was near to Father Dan's eye even, when he gave Barney his blessing, and his advice. "But, Barney," he said, "for one thing I know ye'll not forget us when ye're far away—no more than we'll forget you; and I know, too, that in war or in peace, ye'll never do a thing that can be a cast-up to Knockagar."

Three houses, no less—Padraic Mor's, and Toal-a-Gallagher's, and Corney Hegarty's—were given up to Barney's convoy the night before he started, and all three crowded from the hearth-stone to the doorstep with them that came to enjoy the last spree in Barney's honor. Barney was loaded with messages from fathers and mothers to children in all corners of the States.

He did not hesitate to take charge of all; and would as cheerfully have taken charge of as many more, had such been forthcoming. "And boys," Barney said, with his face lit up, "after the war, provided I'm neither hung, shot, dead, nor a pres'ner, it's I'll be the rich man, an' I'll spend every penny of me wealth buyin' presints to fetch home to yous, only savin' as much as 'ill give yous all, the night I come home again, the grandest blow-out that ever was known in these parts since Micky M'Gurran's nine-day carouse, the time he brought home the wife with the fortune, from County Monaghan."

"God guard ye!" "God prosper ye!" and "God send ye luck, Barney *a thaisge!*" we said, and cheered till the rafters cracked.

And when in the morning Barney took the road, with Billy Brogan and the Widow's Pat before him carrying his box (which Heaven knows, but for decency, might well have been shouldered by Pat alone, without stressing him), half the parish took the road with him to see him well on his way, and the other half stood at their doors to press his hand, and pray God to speed him to fortune, and watch over him in the war; there was a glisten in the eye, and a gulp in the throat of many a one that day.

It was no use either, Barney's trying to kill

their grief with a shaft of wit, or smother it with merry reminiscence.

"Now, Jimminy, me son," to old stooped Jimminny Haraghey, "if ye go givin' the lads a wake afore I come back, I'll reckon ye a meaner man than I used to think ye. *I* want to have the pleasure of helpin' to turn the sod on ye;" and, "Arrah, Shusie Gallagher, don't ye mind all the tanthrums I've put ye in, with me thricks! keep up your heart, Shusie *a gradh,* for with God's help, I'll torment ye again an' again."

But the old women only smiled very sadly at Barney's jokes now, and making him bless himself, and bend his knee, shook the holy water on him ere he hastened on his way.

So, when he had got clear of Cruckagar, Barney was almost drenched.

"I trust in the Lord," he said, as he shook himself, "that I'll not take the rheumatiz."

But when Barney reached the very highest point of the road, where it runs over the Bearna Dearg, he turned, and, crossing his arms, in silence took a last long look at his loved Knockagar where it lay, lonely, dreary, and gray, below. We looked at him, and at Knockagar, but we said no word.

After a long time Barney shook his head slowly from side to side, and he waved one hand toward the scenes he was going from and said: "God be

with ye, Knockagar!" That was all. Then he plucked a bit of heather from the brown moor that runs into the roadside there, and put it in the inside pocket of his waistcoat, and walked on. And for the rest of the way, while we were with him, Barney joked no more.

He enlisted on the very day he set foot in America; and in less than two months after, the word came from him—to Toal-a-Gallagher's—that the President had ordered him "to the front"; and Toal explained for our enlightenment what that phrase meant. "And, hi! for the fun and the fighting," Barney said in his dictated letter, "Barney Brian is going to distinguish himself and cover himself and Knockagar with glory."

He requested that Brian Managhan, the stone-cutter, should be asked to mark out and reserve until his return, the largest stone in Drimkeelan quarry—"For I mean to erect at the cross-roads, when I go back, a monument to my memory, 'To the memory of Colonel Barney Meehan, an Irishman, and an American soldier, who was a native of this humble locality, and born in it, and who won the American war, having been sent to the front, and kept there, till the enemy run—what of them wasn't left dead on the field.'

"Of course," he said, "I'll get Master Who-

riskey to put it into far grander English, regardless of cost."

When Toal took off his spectacles, after reading Barney's epistle, he waved them solemnly, and said—

"An', boys, joke as Barney may about that moniament, we've seen greater wonders than the Americay Govermint itself settin' up a statiay of Barney Brian right on the middle of the main street of New York—in recognition of distinguished sarvices rendered."

And, indeed, we all agreed it was a hopeful sign to find that the President had already discovered Barney's undoubted abilities, and recognised them by sending him to the front.

And when, now, a stranger from Killymard or the Oileigh happened into Toal's of a night, and inquired how the war went, it gave us pride to hear Toal, as he drew a stitch or drove a peg, reply:

"Well, the divil a much startlin' there has been of late, but we'll soon be hearin' somethin'—for the President has ordered Barney Brian to the front."

"Phew-ew-ew!" the stranger would whistle (for Barney, and Barney's fighting qualities were, of course, as familiar as the Hail Mary to everyone

within the bounds of the barony)—"Phew!" he would say, "then there'll be news purty soon."

"Yis," Toal would say, deftly pairing a sole-edge, "the fate of Americay is now on the tosser."

As we sat in a circle around Toal and his journeyman (with our elbows on our knees, and bodies leant forward, as was our habit), and watched them ply their work, in fancy's eye we conjured up the picture of the American nation with bated breath pausing for the issue, while the sword-strokes of Barney Brian reverberated over the land from ocean unto ocean.

When Barney did reach the front, he did not forget Toal-a-Gallagher and Knockagar. He wrote a long letter at least once a fortnight—sometimes once a week. Barney Brian's "letters from the front" became the sensation of the country.

They were wonderfully interesting, containing, as they did, news of doings, and even of battles, that had entirely escaped the ordinary war correspondents, giving strikingly graphic descriptions of great encounters, and picturing all the stirring events of the war, in a brisk, breezy, racy fashion, to which the unoriginal press man was a total stranger.

Barney Brian and General Grant were performing prodigious deeds of valor that made

everyone of us in Knockagar feel a foot higher. The slaughter that Barney with his own good right hand wrought, was something appalling; those who supported him in the war had a trying time indeed clambering over corpses and wading shoe-mouth deep through bloody slush.

"Arrah, tell Billy Brogan," said Barney, "that this isn't like swingin' a blackthorn in Ardara fair."

On one occasion, when pressed hard, Barney had to fight with a sword in each hand, and carrying a led one in his mouth. In one particularly stiff battle his blade got so heated with hard work, that when he returned it to the scabbard it burnt that to a cinder. I cannot tell the sorrow we all felt when Barney informed us that he had lost the *Cliabh Soluis,* which he had named after the wonderful sword in our old folk tales. In one battle where the enemy pressed too thickly upon Barney, it seems he had the ill-fortune to run the *Cliabh Soluis* through five men at one time, and, as he could not withdraw it quickly enough, he had to seize another sword and go ahead, or lose his life.

Barney, with the innate modesty that we had ever known to distinguish him, frankly disclaimed being the hero of all the most notable deeds of the war. He wrote us the full account of the

Mayo boy who fought for five minutes and killed two men after his head was cut off. And the poor fellow might have continued his ludicrous play only that Barney, seeing his comrades were laughing, took pity on him and drew his attention to the fact that he was a dead man.—"For there's your head," says I (these were the words of Barney's letter) "lyin' at the gray horse's heels beyont."

It seems it was cut off so deftly and quickly that the poor Mayo boy never found it going; but he could not now deny the evidence of his senses: so, heaving a sigh, he threw away his sword and stretched himself full length among the rest of the dead. Keenly as he felt for the poor fellow, Barney said, he could barely keep from laughing himself.

During all that time in which Barney's letters from the front were coming, everyone went to Toal-a-Gallagher's at night to hear the latest wonders from Barney and the wars. And the one letter was often discussed, again and again, for fifteen nights in succession, Toal himself illuminating the text in a more striking and effective manner on each succeeding night.

We all agreed that Barney Brian, God bless him and watch over him! was such a credit to Knockagar, as few men ever had been to the place

that gave them birth; and that he and General Grant were head and shoulders above all the other heroes of the war.

But one thing that mortified us much was the fact that, for some unexplained reason, the newspapers maintained a conspiracy of silence regarding the distinguished conduct of Barney.

John Burns at length came to the conclusion that Barney had an envious enemy of wealth and influence, who bribed or coerced the press.

"It isn't that. It isn't that," said Toal-a-Gallagher.

"An' how then can ye explain to me the cure-yus fact," said John, "that while we don't see poor Barney's name wanst mentioned in the accounts of all them battles that's a-fightin', General Grant is at the beginnin' an' the middle, an' the end an' all through them."

"The raison," said Toal, holding out for our inspection the hammer with which he wrought, "is as plain as that hammer in me hand."

He paused, to give us time to acknowledge the palpability of his illustration, and when on leisurely reflection we had granted the premise by an approving nod of our heads, Toal proceeded.

"General Grant," he said, "gets his due share of praise—bekase he's *General Grant;* Barney Brian is totally ignored—bekase he's only poor

Barney Brian." To which conclusive argument we all (including even John Burns), bent our heads, and said sadly: "Right ye are, Toal."

Suddenly Barney's letters ceased coming.

Two weeks passed without a letter, three weeks, four weeks. And the nightly group in Toal's began to shake their heads. There was one little gleam of hope though, to which they fondly clung.

"He may be a pres'ner of war," said Toal-a-Gallagher; and we fervently hoped he was.

"In that case," the Widow's Pat said, "the President 'ill either have him ransomed or raiscued."

"Either ransomed or raiscued," said Toal.

But alas! poor Barney was beyond the power of Presidents to ransom or rescue.

An American newspaper a couple of months old came, by-and-by, to Neil Dunnion, of Glencoagh, from his son John. In the war news was an item which spread a gray melancholy over Knockagar. It said:

"In the repulse which a detachment of our troops met on Wednesday morning, when attacking the enemy's outpost at Merritt's Farm, special mention should be made of the intrepid conduct of a young Irishman, Private Bernard Meehan, who twice rallied his comrades when they were being forced by overwhelming odds to retreat,

and who, when eventually his comrades were compelled to fly in disorder, leaving fifty dead behind them, heroically scorned to move, but single-handed received the charge of the enemy, and fought fiercely and furiously, till he fell in his tracks. His body was recovered when, on Wednesday evening, the enemy was, by a strengthened force, dislodged; and, in recognition of the valiant fellow's heroism, was interred with military honors."

When for the hundred and first time, Toal, with a high head, but yet faltering tongue, read from the much soiled paper this item to another newcomer, we again took off our hats and with lowered heads listened to the last record of poor Barney; and when Toal had finished we said: "May God have mercy on ye, Barney Brian! Amen! Amen!"

. . . . . .

When Johnnie MacDyer came home, three years after, with a sergeant's pension, he told us all about Barney.

Barney had been in his company, as well as Toal-a-Gallagher's son, the Vagabone, and four other Knockagar boys.

Barney Brian, he said, was the boldest and best fighter that shouldered a musket in the Civil War;

and Barney would sooner be fighting than eating bread and butter.

Johnnie said that Barney never went into a skirmish or battle without a piece of heather stuck in the front of his cap—the piece which he pulled at the Bearna Dearg, when he took his last sad look at Knockagar.

"If the coward feelin' (which God forbid!), should ever come over me," Barney told his comrades, "the thought of what's stuck in me cap 'ill narve me again—bekase, with a sprig of heather from within sight of Knockagar in me cap, I wouldn't yield ground to a battalion of divils."

And as he said, he felt. Barney never did retreat. Twice on the day on which he fell, Sergeant MacDyer told, he saved the situation with that sprig of heather. For when his comrades would retreat, he just waved the cap with its sprig of heather in the faces of the half-dozen Knockagar boys, and sang out, "Knockagar *a buaidh! a buaidh!*" * with the result that the Knockagar boys held their ground and thus rallied the remainder of the detachment.

When at length Barney fell fighting alone, there were three of the Knockagar boys already stretched wounded or dead on the hill-side, close by him—one of them Sergeant Johnnie MacDyer;

* Gaelic for "To Victory!"

Johnnie, by-and-by, was able to crawl to where Barney lay. He said that Barney was hacked and riddled in a pitiful fashion.

"'Barney *a bhouchaill!*' says I, 'are ye dead?' when I looked at him.

"Barney opened one eye an' looked at me for a minute.

"'Johnnie,' says he, 'I'm dead if I was sensible.* How is it with yourself?'

"'Och,' said I, 'nothin' to talk of barrin' a leg or so gone, I suppose.'

"'Then, Johnnie,' says he, for the devilment was dancin' in him, an' the life only just comin' an' goin' with his breath—— 'Then, Johnnie, ye mumbskull,' says he, 'ye must be a dead man, since ye haven't a kick in ye. And, Johnnie,' says he, 'if God sends that ye ever take the life with ye back to Knockagar, I'd like to be hearin' ye tell the story in Toal's. Is Patrick Melly down?' says he.

"'Pathrick,' says I, 'is down an' dead (God have mercy on him); Micky *Ruadh* is wounded, an' the rest of the Knockagar boys are safe.'

"Barney didn't say a word for some minnits.

"'May God have mercy on poor Patrick,' says he, 'an' but it is me is sorry for his poor widda

* *i.e.* "I should be dead, if only I had the sense to acknowledge it."

mother.—Johnnie,' says he, 'Taigie Haghie is my purse carrier. Whichever of ye comes through these wars with the life, I want him to give Father Dan one poun' for masses for me—an' the rest is to buy a milk-cow for the Widda Melly. There's a bit of heather,' says he—'don't laugh at me, Johnnie, but I want it to be buried with me, cap an' all. On the last day, Johnnie, there'll be half-a-dozen Knockagar lads proud to muster roun' it.' "

"A priest came along now, an' lay down beside Barney to confess him an' give him the rites.

" 'Johnnie,' says he to me after, 'I now feel as light as when the creel would come off me back after takin' two hundred iv buildin' stones to the top of Dhrimkeelan hill to Paddy Mháire's new house.'

"He lived three-quarters of an hour after. An' just afore he did die, he says, 'Johnnie!'

" 'What is it, Barney *a gradh?*' says I.

" 'Do ye know what I'm thinkin' of? Ha! ha!' says the poor fella strugglin' to get a laugh out of him.

" 'I'm thinkin' about the moniamint to meself that I promised Toal an' the lads at home, to erect, when I'd go back with rank an' riches.'

"Says I, 'Well, Barney, comfort yourself, be-

kase on account of the Widda's milk-cow there'll be a moniamint afore ye in Heaven.'

"'But, ha! ha! that's the point, Johnnie *a thaisge,*' says he, 'the Widda's cow itself 'ill be the rarest moniamint ever the mind of man invinted—a moniamint walkin' about on four legs and givin' milk, an' theivin' in Matthew Malia's kail-garden. Johnnie, did ye ever hear tell of the bait of it?'

"Poor Barney turned his head to the wan side, an' the soul went out of him while the smile was still on his face at the consait of the thing.

"I closed his hand on the bit of heather. An' on the Last Day it's Barney Brian 'ill be the plaised man when he opens his eyes an' finds it there."

. . . . . .

And every night and morning that the Widow Melly milked the monument (for going out or coming in, it was known by no other name than "Barney Brian's Moniamint"), she prayed to God—a prayer that found an echo in every heart in Knockagar—that Barney's awakening might be a glorious one.

And somehow I think it will be so.

XIV

ALL ON THE BROWN KNOWE

MICHAEL CONNOLLY was now warm and well-to-do—trig and snug, as we say, with a faithful little wife and five rosy-cheeked children, and twenty acres of prime land lying along the bottom of Cronaraid Mountain. Though, indeed, one strip of his land, the Stony Park, tore away from the remainder, and sprang up the side of the hill for the length of a long gun-shot, enclosing within its upper limit the one little green patch of the whole hillside, the choice dancing-ground of the fairies of Cronaraid, with its little well whose waters were sweet, and which was called—though in Gaelic—the Fairy Bowl. With his dear little wife Mary, and his five chubby children, and his snug farm, Michael should have been, and was, a happy man, as well as a prosperous. To be happy and prosperous he well deserved, for he was a model to the parish, a comfort to the sorely-tried heart of Father Tom, and pre-eminently a religious man, whose fervent prayer in trial ever was, "Thy will, O Lord, not mine, be done."

As Michael was blessed, his trials were few. But one great trouble he had, else had we no story. 'Twas under the Fairy Bowl that the cause of his trouble lay. At the bottom of this little basin of water—as all the world knows, and as anyone can find for himself by testing with his umbrella, and as one may often-times see laid bare, when in the summer the well goes dry—is a great broad flag—an unusual well-bottom, but be it remembered that this was a fairy well—a great broad flag that (as all the world again, and particularly the parish of Drimard knows) covers a crock of gold, that was hidden there about two thousand years ago by an old pagan, who, at the same time, left an ugly big serpent to guard it. This fellow has done his work well and faithfully, having now for two thousand years, day and night, embraced the crock with many coils, quitting his charge only for five minutes on the morning of every Sunday and holiday—the five minutes of the Elevation, during Mass, in the chapel of Drimard, which stands in full view, and lies only half a mile away from the well. During these sacred minutes, the monster, free to quit his charge, uncoils himself, and by way of an underground brooklet makes rapid journey down the hillside to the larger stream below, returning immediately—a weekly walk for exercise merely.

It was this crock of gold that at one period of his life weighted for years Michael Connolly's soul, threatening the happiness that had always been his, and certainly undermining it, had not his good angel suddenly and surprisingly saved him in the manner which this story relates.

That the crock of gold, with its demon guardian, lay securely under the flag beneath the Fairy Bowl was beyond a doubt; for any aged man in the parish could tell you that the fact was an admitted one in his barefoot days fourscore years before, and had been, too, in the like days of his father, and of his father's father; and on account of the demon that dwelt in serpent shape beneath the pleasantly set Fairy Bowl, the Fairy Bowl was dreaded and shunned then as now. All his days, of course, Michael had known well of the existence of this treasure upon his land; yet had it not given him much concern. It was there, and it was not meant for human hands; that was sufficient. He toiled and moiled, gathering gold in the way in which it brings most benefit and least bane in its train. But at length, when through his own perseverance and the kindliness of his soul, he attained that height of enviable affluence where a man may sport an unpatched broadcloth coat, Sunday and holiday, fair-day and market, and look with pardonable pity upon less fortunate,

more bepatched neighbors, whom, cheerily saluting, he passes on the way, Michael's mind, mysteriously enough, began to run more and more upon the hidden crock of gold. It was pity to have so much good wealth going waste, of no benefit whatsoever to the old pagan who owned it, or to the serpent which guarded it, any more than to the world at large. It was wonderful to think that such a pile of yellow gold lay on *his* land, only a few spade-deep beneath the surface. What good might not Michael do if he had in his possession this hoard? Good to all his poor neighbors around him; to the chapel, that sorely needed a new roof; to Father Tom, whose black coat was very green; and to the world wide—not to mention, of course, the direct benefit resulting from it to Michael Connolly. This latter, Michael felt assured, weighed least with him—though, to be sure, there was a neat little farm lying into his own and belonging to Little Johnny McGrory, which would very soon be in the market (for, God help Little Johnny, the world was going ill with him!), and it would be mighty pleasant if Michael had the power, by purchasing this, of doubling his landed possessions; and there was a field of Jimminy Hegarty's—no great things of a field, of course, but still a field—further up the valley, which it was thought Jimminy would part

with if any man had the pluck to dar' him with a neat price; and there was—ay, there were two or three other fields, or, maybe, four or more, here and there, which would fatten fine calves and raise a mortal grand crop of potaties, and which would make a very valuable addition to any man's little farm. It would delight Michael's heart, also, to see little Patrick (his eldest) made into a priest—but it would take money to do that. And little Johneen too was destined for paths of jurisprudence; for Michael had often noticed with stealthy admiration that, no matter what little gifts in the way of either sweets or toys or else came into the possession of the other children of a morning, little Johneen owned them all in the evening; and money would certainly be most useful in developing Johneen's marvelous legal talent. Altogether, money was far from being the ill thing that those who needed it were, for the delectation of those who had it, crying it up to be.

It was at the time that Manis MacLoughlin of Magheramore, who astonished his neighbors by building a house with a dozen windows and purchasing farm after farm of land, was said to have found a crock of gold on his land, that Michael, who never gave the matter a thought before, began to brood upon the great wealth

which was so temptingly within his reach—so temptingly within it, and yet so tantalizingly beyond it. During the one little space of time in each week when an enterprising man might with impunity lift the crock of gold from under the Fairy Bowl, a religious man, such as Michael, dare not be there to do it. Even the very outcasts of the parish, who desecrated the Lord's day by playing cards for horny buttons at the back of a windy ditch (for, of course, no Christian house would harbor them), dare not be guilty of the crime of missing Mass—missing, too, that most sacred part of it, which was the time chosen by the wily serpent for taking his weekly saunter. Farrell McKeown, the ne'er-do-well, it is true, purposely remained away from Mass one day, five years before, in order that, when the coast was clear, he might steal the loan of Eamonn Og's game rooster for the Cock-Tuesday fights in Killymard. But, if he did, Father Tom gave him Carrig-na-Mlaguard for it for three successive Sundays, making him journey hatless and shoeless to Carrig-na-Mlaguard, or the Blackguard's Rock, and kneel there, telling his sin to an unsympathetic congregation filing past, and, in plaintive voice, beseeching their prayers. This price was too dear, even to an outcast, for the luxury of missing Mass. But, in Michael's case,

the pious principles of the man were deterrent enough, not to speak of his great moral prestige in the parish.

He sought for long to find a way of compassing the crock without incurring the contingent sin. He tried attending the Mass which in the neighboring chapel was celebrated an hour earlier than that appointed for the Mass in Drimard. This scheme failed him; for, though he quitted the Killymard chapel the moment the priest had reached the trimmings, and hasted with violent haste, and though, likewise, Father Tom never stickled on punctuality, but delayed Mass till even the last laggards lumbered in, Michael, when he arrived at the Fairy Bowl, panting and perspiring, coatless and breathless, always perceived—for the Drimard chapel was just over against him, and a goodly portion of the congregation ever knelt, for fresh air and freedom's sake, outside the door —that 'twas after Elevation time with Father Tom, and the serpent had again encoiled the prize which he had striven for as strenuously as a runner at Olympus. Yet, it is highly creditable to Michael's religious principles that under such trying circumstances he could (as he did) bend forward his perspiring brow, and say aloud, as best he could for breathlessness, "Thy will, O Lord,

not mine, be done!"—a constant, beautiful prayer this God-serving of man.

He thought and planned, contrived and recontrived, ever unsuccessfully, till at last, even an unsuspicious parish was beginning to ask had anything come over Michael Connolly, or was he going to become a brooder—for surely the world wasn't going again' him, and trouble coming down on him? Michael knew well he was a changed man himself. But he meant, with God's help, that he would soon be his old self again—and something better—as soon, in short, as he got that crock of gold into his possession. But until that was accomplished he could not keep the thought of it from his mind, strive as he would. Not even, God forgive him! (and contritely Michael uttered it) during his prayers—what time his mind was *sure* to be running on the crock.

So matters were coursing when Michael found himself sauntering to Mass on Easter Sunday—of all days—turning over again in his head for the ten-thousandth time a new contrivance for securing the crock of gold and happiness evermore. It was a warm, bright, lovely Sunday morning, with blackbirds whistling in the hedges, and the brook singing in the glen, and the young people airily and merrily tripping past him, decked out in their gayest. But to these gay sounds and

sights Michael's heart did not thrill as once it used to do. The merry voices of the passers-by jarred on his ear, and the genial heat of the day oppressed his frame; so that, when he reached the Brown Knowe—that favorite fairy-ground which rises so pleasantly from the wayside just within a gun-shot of the chapel—since there was yet plenty of time and to spare before Mass began, rather than mingle with his light-hearted poor neighbors, who would be chatting too cheerily for him around the chapel-gate, he toiled up the Knowe, past its one solitary occupant (to wit, Torloch MacFadyeen's goat which was taking a delicious lunch off a heather bush), till, coming near the top of it he threw himself down full-length in face of the sun, pulling his hat over his eyes that he might properly laze without any discomfort, and pursue the absorbing train of thought on which he had been engaged.

Oh, if only he could become the possessor of that crock of gold, how happy would he be, as well as beneficent! But, alas, sure he had looked at it in every light, and tried every contrivance, and was now forced to the conclusion that with the demon-serpent guarding it always—almost always, rather—there was not any possible means of obtaining it—not any possible means, that is, short of missing Mass—which, of course, was ut-

terly impossible—or nearly impossible—or very hard, at least. When, however, one permitted oneself the hazardous pleasure of dwelling upon that impossible possibility, what a gorgeous castle one could raise—a crimeful castle, of course—bad as Blue Beard's—still undoubtedly a gorgeous one. Ay, if only this great crime were not a crime! If a man could once—only once—remain away from Mass—a man, too, who had never missed Mass in all his life before, since he came to years of discretion! If only a man who had never missed Mass before, and who had resolved never to miss it again, could for once—only one single little time—remain away, thereby enriching himself, and securing his happiness for all time—in this world, of course, that is! When one came to think of it, if a man, even at cost of one little sin, acquired enormous wealth, could he not redeem his debt ten times over—ay, a hundred times over—with the wealth he should become possessed of, giving, say, as much as a quarter of the money to God's poor, and another quarter of it scattering chapels to His honor all over the face of the country, and living a rich, happy, contented, virtuous, religious man upon the other half himself!

Put defeat upon the devil by flight, is a wise maxim surely. It is ill to play with forbidden thoughts. Suddenly crying out, "I'll do it—this

once!" Michael sprang to his feet, set his face towards Cronaraid and the Fairy Bowl, tore down the Brown Knowe, and literally flew in that direction—flew—for fear his conscience should overtake him ere he had reaped the benefit from the sin now, *de jure,* committed—which would be pitiable mismanagement.

He went by Torloch's house, gripped a pick and spade there, and, shouldering them, sped onward, bounding up the Stony Park, and stopped not till he stood beside the Fairy Bowl, which, to-day, after a fortnight's drouth, was dry as his own hearth-stone. He gasped, trying to recover his breath; he looked away toward the chapel, and saw that the congregation were dropping to their knees after the first gospel. During the tedious age—common mortals had reckoned it by minutes—that then intervened before he observed the congregation prostrating themselves at the Elevation, Michael, with heart thumping at his ribs so loudly that he thought it waked echoes among the rocks above, and with teeth set firm as a vise, holding fast his desperate resolve, leant forward over the spade-handle, his protruding eyes on the Drimard congregation. The instant their falling forward indicated the arrival of the sacred moments—moments pregnant for him, Michael was furiously tearing at the ground with pick and

spade alternately. It was hard and tough, and troublesome, but he found he had ten men's strength. So made he stone and clay fly that an onlooker might not make out his figure amid the clouds of débris that filled the air around. But at length he had unbound the great flag at the well-bottom, and, for the minutes were too-rapidly passing, throwing himself hurriedly on his knees, the while big beads of sweat came rolling from his brow, wrestled with it. It came with him. And, at the sight disclosed his eyes were dazzled—dazzled! A crock of golden pieces, every one of them the size of a silver crown, and the rich color of Nabla's yellow butter, calmly sitting there, now unguarded, awaiting human hand to lift it!

I said he was dazzled, I might have said dazed. Because for the space of several minutes he could only gloat over the elbow-deep crock of yellow pieces which were to make Michael Connolly a prince of earth. He could not yet reach out to lift the crock; he could not rise him from his knees; he had not yet power to move one muscle —but it was delicious paralysis, during which he could feel the tears of joy crushing at his eyelids. Like a lightning-flash struck him thought of time and the serpent! And instantly he was himself again. He bent over the crock and laid his arms

lovingly around it, entering—oh, Heaven!—into joyful possession! His ecstasy was interrupted by a terrific tug at his tail. He threw a hasty glance over his shoulder, let his great armful of riches drop back to its bed again, and lifted up his voice in frightful scream! For the serpent had come up unawares from behind, and laid hold upon his coat-tail!

He had delayed a minute too long. The joy of his possession had proved his undoing. He was on his feet in the fraction of a second, and flying afar over the country, but with the terrible serpent, a great and weighty monster, fastened to his flying coat-tails and streaming behind, heavily weighting him. He could see its dire, sinuous form each time he cast over shoulder a fearful glance. Halt, stop, or delay meant death, Michael well knew. And his coat was surely glued to his shoulders. His only chance of safety lay in speed, which would keep it at safe distance. If once he allowed his coat-tails to overtake him, he was undone. So, leaning still further forward to balance the pull behind, but with head thrown back and eyes starting forth anticipating his tardy feet—to his impatient soul they seemed tardy that were truly fleet—he flew, as flies the hare, straight ahead, down the hillside, across the valley, up the opposite slope, unto the highway

which led past Drimard chapel. As he neared the chapel and the kneeling congregation, he cried out with all his might that they might be ready to relieve him. Disturbed in their devotions, they turned heads over shoulder, and were seized with wondrous amaze at sight of Michael, hatless, wild-eyed, speeding, and shouting as he sped, from the serpent sailing behind. But their amazement was too profound to admit of their acting with the promptitude that the circumstances demanded. They should have knocked the cursed animal on the head with their sticks as he passed—a thing which, unluckily, no man had presence of mind to do; and, alas, Michael could not wait on the sluggish wheels of these people's minds. He cursed them—Michael Connolly, who had never breathed banned word before!—and swept on. They got again their presence of mind, when they were in good time to be late; for, immediately he had passed, Michael heard their wild cries in pursuit, and he could know in bitterness of heart that they were now brandishing sticks and doing doughty deeds against the harmless air. And when they cried after him, "Stop, stop, till we get a crack at the sarpint, Michael!" Michael wished in his heart that he could only stop to get a crack at the senseless *amadáns* who so shouted. He turned his head and flung a fervent curse at

his following, while he strenuously strove for increase of speed; but the tug behind restrained his career, he thought, ever more and more. Away up the road, he beheld Patrick Ban hacking at the hedge with a bill-hook, even though it was the Sabbath day; and Michael rejoiced for that Patrick's sin might now be his salvation. He yelled upon Patrick as he came near: the congregation still more loudly yelled upon Patrick. One well-directed blow of Patrick's bill-hook would give to Michael the life with which, otherwise, he felt he must soon part. In a minute Michael, to his mortification, beheld Patrick bound into the middle of the road, wildly waving the bill-hook to bar his way. Great Heavens! Patrick must think him gone mad, and the people pursuing to put him into the strait-waistcoat. Michael then made aim to fly on one side, past Patrick, who, seeing this, bounded to that side, getting directly in his course again. There was only one thing for Michael to do, and he did it. Lowering his head, he threw himself full force upon Patrick, ramming him in the stomach. Clearing his curled-up body at a bound, he continued his fleet career. Manis Og O'Gallagher who was cleaning out his byre when the shouting reached and roused him, got before Michael with a graip; and Eamon O'Beirne stationed himself in the way, somewhat further

on, armed with a scythe. Good Mrs. Bridget Boyle, still further on his course, came out with a pot-stick; Terry the tailor came forth with lap-board—all bent upon deeds of derring-do. But all of them ingloriously bit the dust—in each case quickly arising again, however, and with ardor throwing them into the pursuit.

Behind him now was Babel. But suddenly rising over it, sharp and clear, he heard a "Hi! hi! hi! there!" that was from none other than Father Tom. Casting back a hurried glance, he was somewhat surprised to find that Father Tom, on whose start a handicap in favor of his congregation must necessarily have been imposed, now led. He was waving his stick and calling in the imperative tones of a pastor accustomed to obedience, "Hi, hi, hi! there, Michael Connolly!" But, pastor or no pastor, Michael could not halt. The weight at his tail was becoming a weight at his soul. Instead of obeying he bent him for renewed exertion. Yet Father Tom (who had got miraculously fleet of foot) had in another minute overhauled him. A powerful whack of the priest's stick apprised Michael of the fact; and, at the same time, the priest's voice, in his ear, crying to him angrily:

"It's to Carrig-na-Mlaguard you'll march for this, my lad! Slumbering like a sloth, and bellow-

ing like a calf, on the Brown Knowe, while the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is supposed to be celebratin'. And the remnants of the tails ate out of your new broadcloth coat, too, by Torloch's goat —who'd have got a taste of yourself likewise (and the devil's cure to you!) if I hadn't happened along just in the nick of time. Up with ye!" and he gave Michael, who, in sitting posture, was rubbing his eyes and trying to collect his senses, a sounding whack in the ribs that lifted him to his feet, and sent him down the Brown Knowe in quick time, and scurrying along the road to the chapel.

The congregation wondered why Michael Connolly looked so dazed as he pushed in through them—and their wonder was supplanted by subdued amusement when they got a glimpse of his rear. They would not have wondered at Michael's look had they known of the conflicting emotions that held him both then and throughout all the Mass—the anguished horror of all he had come through in the five minutes that he had slumbered on the Brown Knowe, and the all-as-painful joy for that it was not real. But, as minute after minute lapsed, the joy of escape outweighed more and more the horror—so much so indeed, that had Father Tom put his threat into execution, and sent him hatless, shoeless, to kneel at Carrig-na-

Mlaguard, beseeching the sympathy of a jeering congregation, he felt he could have done so with delight swelling at his heart. As he walked home, breathing air that was as wine, the beautiful sense of relief that pervaded every nerve in his body made him utterly oblivious of the discourse directed at him by passing neighbors, and the smiles and smudges, too—even the hilarious laughter of rude youths, who elbowed their fellows, directing attention to Michael Connolly's chewed-off coat-tails. He said to himself a hundred times, "It was a warning, Michael, it was a warning. Thank God for it! You have done once and for all, now, with that crock of cursed gold inunder the Fairy Bowl, an' ye're going to be happy again."

It is true that Nabla raged, questioning him, when he entered home in his curtailed coat. But even Nabla's rage was almost a joy to him now. He drew his arms from out the coat, leaving it with her, strode up to the room which was above the kitchen, closed the door behind him, and then knelt down, bowing his head above clasped hands, and in angelic resignation praying—"Oh, Lord, Thy will, not mine, be done!"—But his eye inadvertently glanced through the window, toward the Stony Park, and rested on the pleasant green spot which encircled the Fairy Bowl;

whereupon shaking his head sorrowfully, as he dropped back to human plane, he added, in undertone—to himself, not the Lord—"Though 'tis mortal shame it must be so."

XV

THE HEART-BREAK OF NORAH O'HARA

IF you screenged all Ireland with a herrin'-net from Derry to Kerry and back again, it's my head foregain' a crooked h'penny that no *sonsier,* heartier, happier couple could you catch than Norah O'Hara and her man Barney, who lived together on the aist shoulder of Haverly Hill, with their back to the win' and their face to the sun, in a wee whitewashed thatched house, as clean as a hound's tooth, and filled from thresh-hold to back stone, and from floor to riggin' with aise, paice, and God's grace—so full that there wasn't left a rush's point o' room for cark or care to light a foot upon.

Their five acres of lowlands, and mountain run for sixty sheep, gave them full and plenty, left them well fed and warmly clad, owin' no man at the year's end, and snapping their fingers at hunger, hardships, Winter weather, and nor'aist winds.

The good-luck crickets that chorused from their chimney, the neighbors could hear half a mile

away. And "Happy as Norah O'Hara's hearthstone" was a byword for the baronry.

Little likelihood there seemed of Norah and Barney's happiness haltin' this side o' heaven, when a happenin' happened one night in the Spring o' the year, that, if the good Lord hadn't been overpartial to the pair, would have set the cloud in their cottage for once and for all and forever.

'Twas of a night in the last o' March, in the night's middle, or maybe drawin' on mornin', that me brave Barney was suddenly wakened from a sound sleep and happy dhraims by a heart-broken sob from Norah that would splinther the knots in mahogany; and he found her sitting up in her out-shot bed, which was nigh the kitchen fire, moanin' and groanin' as if she was waitin' the Last Minute.

"Musha, Norah, asthore," says he, "tell me what's come over ye—or will I run for doctor and priest?"

"Och! Och!" says she, "'tis little more good than them two black turf at the hearthstone, doctor or priest would mean to me in my calamity."

"Why, Norah!" says Barney, "is it as bad as that, that it is?"

"Nobbut twice worse," says she.

"Make me sinsible, avourneen," says he.

"It's what," says she, "I woke sudden out of me sound sleep just now, with thought in my mind of the comely handsome fellow you, Barney O'Hara, were, the day that I married you seven-and-thirty years ago, come We'nsday next."

"Well, be the lawdhers," says Barney, when he got his breath with him, "but that was a quare thing entirely for to frighten ye into fits!"

"Och! Och! Barney," says she, "but 'twas thinkin' of what you looked like in your youth and your straightness and your handsomeness then, and knowin' what you look in your age and your stoop and wrinkledness now, that put the crushin' heartbr'ak on me."

"Tchuk! tchuk! tchuk!" says Barney, "Did ever any one under heaven hear tell of such a dumbfoundherin' woman's raison for bein' overtuk by a heartbr'ak!"

"Och! och!" says Norah, says she, with another sigh that would split the heart of a whinstone rock, "why wouldn't the good Lord have left you to me the comely, bright-eyed, black-haired, red-cheeked boy you were on our weddin' day! Neither rant nor raison is of no use, Barney. From this day till the day I die I'll never know aise or paice, bewailin' my calamity."

"Is it crazy the woman's gone, entirely?" says the dumbfoundered Barney.

"Crazy or lazy—nickname it as you please, Barney O'Hara," says Norah, "but that won't help me sad case. Unless yourself or the good Lord works a miracle and gives back to me the self-same Barney that Father MacHugh married me on, seven-and-thirty years ago, 'tis a heart-broken woman I'll hurry to me grave."

And there you were!

Poor Barney could as aisy fetch down the stars with finger stones as he could raison into the head of his sighin' and sorrowin' Norah the raison for the change that had come over him in thirty-seven years. Norah neither bobbed an eye herself, nor let him stail a wink, the remainder of the night—and did little good next day—nor any day for a fortnight followin'.

Neither priest nor parson could get common sinse into the inside of her head. She'd never cease honin' and moanin' over the handsome Barney she'd long ago married. Until she fell into melancholy, and the pair who'd been the happiest, found themselves the miserablest, within the barony.

Like a moonstruck half-wit, Barney went mumpin' and mopin' day after day up hill and down dale. Till one evenin' of May itself, he was returnin' home from one of his meanderin's—and, skirtin' the rim of Crolly Hill (always famed

far and wide for its fairies), he was roused from the sort of day-dream in which he was, by hearing a tick-tock! tick-tock! coming fast and furious from the hawthorn hedge at the hill's bottom.

"Be the powers," says Barney, says he, after he had listened for a minute with his mouth opened, "but, if there's a leprechawn on the world's rim this evenin', that's one."

And, as he snooked toward the hedge, on his tippy-toes, he had his heart in his mouth. For, all the world knows that the man who finds a leprechawn—who can grant you any wish in the wide world—is luckier far than him who finds a diamond mine.

And, sure enough, in two minutes' time, Barney's eyes were blessed with the sight of a weeny teeny leprechawn cobbling the fairy shoes under a fairy thorn. And, in two minutes more, by noiseless marchin' and good gineralship, he had the dumbfoundhered little jintleman by the scroof o' the neck, and layin' him under commands.

Afther the tricksome villain had vainly tried all his arts to get Barney's eye lifted from him, so he might vanish, he at last had to purchase his freedom by consentin' to grant Barney whatever wish he wanted.

"Wish for whatsomever you choose," says the leprechawn, "and yours it'll be."

Now, as aisy as kiss your han', Barney could have had a thousand pounds, or such a flock of sheep as would make black and white the hill of Crolly; but right wisely he said to himself, " 'Tis small account are pots o' gold, or flocks o' sheep, if one hasn't content: and that's a blessin' I'll not know till Norah's calamity is counteracted."

So without stop or stay, he says to the leprechawn, " 'Tis what I wish that I might be as young and handsome again as I was on my weddin' day."

"Your wish you'll have," says the leprechawn, "this night, the morra night, or the night after, ere the turn o' the moon. On either one of the three nights, within the hour before dawn, when the ring o' day has just begun showin' over the shoulder of Croagh Ghorm, be at the Well of Wurra Mor, and throw into it three king-fern stalks in the name o' the fairies, and drink from it three drinks o' water in heaven's name. Then you'll be what you've wished to be. Only," says the leprechawn, "observe well that ye don't give away the saicret—else it'll be worse for ye."

With a happy heart Barney could then afford to free his leprechawn, and let him vanish. Home he didn't go that night, but walked the dales till the appointed hour came, and found him by the

Well of Wurra Mor, and carryin' out the little fella's diractions.

In a jiffy he found himself a strait and strong bouchal again, alive and active, with the blood of young manhood scamperin' in his veins and thrashin' at the doors of his heart! And the soon-risen day showed him in the shiny waters a black-haired, bright-eyed, rosy-cheeked comely young fellow, whose handsome aiqual was rare, and far to find.

And with the blood of him singin' and the heart of him dancin', 'tis hurryin' home to Norah me brave Barney quickly was.

At the fireside stirring the breakfast stirabout, and wondering to herself what on earth had happened to Barney who didn't come home last night, Norah was, when he reached the house. And to surprise and overjoy her, he said never a word, as he slipped in o' the door, and up behind her at the fireside, and threw his arms around her. And when she turned up to him an alarmed countenance, he gave her a right hearty *pog* straight on the lips of her, and then drew back a step just to dumbfoundher her out and out with the spectacle of the comely young Barney that she'd wedded seven-and-thirty years ago.

But instead of the cry of joy he expected, 'twas a roar o' rage Norah put out of her, as she wal-

loped him across the face with the pot-stick, nearly knocking him completely off his understandin's.

"How dare ye, ye impudent jackeen!" says she. "If my man Barney was here, 'tis sweep the floor with you he'd do, before drowndin' your impudence in the du'ghill!"

"Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!" Barney he laughed, with his hands on his sides, and tryin' to contain himself at the joke o' the thing.

"Is it not know me you do, Norah?" says he.

"No, nor, what's more, do I want to know the likes o' ye. Begone!" says she, "from me sight now and forever," lifting the pot-stick again and makin' such a *poltog* at him that, if he hadn't jumped like a hare, would have made mash of his skull for him.

"But take a long look at me, Norah," says he, as best he could for the merriment that was shakin' him.

"A little of some people goes a long way," says she, makin' another smash at him. "Begone wit' ye, out o' me sight!"

"But, Norah! Norah!" says he—

"If you're still standin' there when Barney comes in," says she, "you'll have your hide well warmed for you the next minute afther!"

"But Norah, *a stor,*" says he, "sure it's Barney I am!"

It's look at him she did then as if she would swallow him without givin' him a tooth. Her look of contimpt soon changed to one of wonder; and, next minute her eyes were the size of small saucers, with surprise.

"Why," says she, "whoever ye are or whatever ye are, you're the dead spit of what my Barney was the day I wedded him seven-and-thirty years ago, come We'nsday."

"And that's what I am, Norah," says he. "For woeful weeks you've been heartbroken for to have me back in the comely youth of my weddin' day. Now you have me as you wish me and you'll never know an onhappy moment in your life more."

"Barney!" says she, "Barney!" takin' hold of him in her arms. "It's like, I'd do, to go on me knees thankin' heaven for this—and never get up again! And," says she, "tell me how did you manage it!"

"Och, Norah!" says he, "just be content to thank heaven, without bein' over curious. How I managed it is a saicret that I darsen't tell you."

For the very dint o' the joy it's hardly spake she could, but hugged Barney till his ribs cracked, and cried over him as she would a baby in the

cradle. And, sure enough, for the first time in a black fortnight Norah O'Hara's heart was as happy as a hare in harvest.

Only, there was one wee drawback to her joy that kept it from being complete out and out. If she could only pry Barney's secret from him, or how he got his youth again, she'd no longer have any unfulfilled wish in all the worl'.

So, instead of givin' up herself and Barney to the happy heartedness that should be theirs, she worried herself and wearied him, entreatin' that he let her know how he done the miracle.

"Now can't you be happy," Barney said, "havin' me as you wanted me, and let well enough alone before you spoil the puddin'."

But she wouldn't. She'd be happy forever and never pine for anything else if she could only discover Barney's saicret. And till he would tell it to her, she said her mind wouldn't know aise, paice, nor content.

All of that lee-long day she kept naggin' at Barney to know his saicret—and well into the night, too. And when both of them from sheer weariness fell asleep at last, she'd rouse up every half-hour with new strength enough to wake Barney, and begin again her beseechin' all over.

So that at long last my poor Barney by break o' day in the mornin', broke down complete and

told her the before and the behind of his saicret.

"And now," says Barney, says he, "your noggin' o' happiness is full for evermore—and I can have me sleep."

But that instant Norah wrung her hands and raised a heart-rendin' wail that would shame a banshee.

"And och, Barney O'Hara," says she, "when it was as aisy to wish for two as for one, wasn't it the unmanly thing for you to do—to go wishin' youth for yourself, alone, laivin' me a gray-haired and withered old hag! Och! och! och!" says she, wailin' as if her heart would burst, "wasn't that the quare thing for you to do, Barney O'Hara!"

And if Norah had been onhappy before she wormed his saicret from Barney, she was now in misery entirely. And Barney got neither rest, paice, nor aise, havin' to harken to her weepin' and wailin' all that day long. Every time that he ventured to laive the house, in behopes to aise his ears for a few minutes of the doleful cries of her, she'd raise the uproar that it was goin' out he was now to have the young girls admirin' him, without any consarn for the poor old wisp of a woman, who had worn herself out for him for seven-and-thirty years and was now only fit to be thrown in a dark corner.

And there you were! She dinned her woes into Barney's tired head till heaven sent the sleep of weariment to him, in his bed, long after midnight of the second day of their happiness.

It was after daybreak when he woke up. And, wonderin' at the paice that filled the house for the first time in forty-eight hours he turned round and found Norah's place in the bed empty. She had slipped off while he was sleepin', and had left the door open. The poor distracted man, considerin' that his wife had lost her wits, and went off to do harm to herself, bounced from his bed and pulled his duds on him, and away with him over the country askin' of everyone he met if they'd seen Norah.

But neither hint nor hair of her did he find nor hear, till he met up with a group of child totterin' to school, and was cross-quistioning them likewise to no purpose. The heart of him was touched to see one littler child than any of them, hurrying after them, and sobbing heart-br'akingly. He lifted the little one in his arms, and in his own tender sootherin' way, asked it what ailed it, to keep it sobbin' so.

"Barney, Barney, Barney, *avillish!*" it says back to him, "don't you know me! Sure it's your wife Norah, I am!"

You might knock Barney down with a sthraw,

he was so thunderstruck at the answer the child gave him. But lookin' closer, it was dumbfoundhered entirely he was, to see that sure enough 'twas Norah herself that was in it.

"Norah! Norah! Norah! *alanna!*" says he, "what's this, or what's happened, tell me?"

"Och, Barney," says she, "the world's come to an end entirely! After learnin' your saicret, and desirin' to make myself a fittin' and winsome young wife for the comely young husband ye are, I hurried off with meself to get my good wish at the Well of Wurra Mor, 'afore day should br'ak on this third and last mornin' o' the charm.

"But wirra, wirra, wirra, wantin' to make the sure thing doubly sure, I didn't stop at three drinks, but went on and took six! And ye behold what it left me! a child of eight years old!"

"Och, och!" groaned poor Barney, "there's the woman o' it again. Enough is never sufficient."

"And from this time out," wailed Norah, "this child as the wife of Barney O'Hara, 'ill be the cold worl's laughing stock. Till now," says she, "I never knew what rale misery was. Och! och! och!" and her sobbing would melt the heart of a crowbar.

" 'Tis a purty mess you have made of our lives," says Barney, blubberin', himself, at last. "But as you couldn't laive things as God meant them,

the next best thing we can do is take the consequences like loyal Christians. Come home with me, Norah," says he, gatherin' the child in his arms again, "and let's make the best of it."

"Brave words well said!" says a suddent little voice above their heads that made both of them stumble and look up.

A cry came from the two of their mouths when they beheld none other than the leprechawn himself saited on a swayin' branch of the hawthorn bush that was bloomin' above them—comfortably saited and smilin' a smile on both o' them that was half worriment and half merriment.

" 'Tis seldom," says he, "that I give wish of my own free will to man or mortal. But I have such pity on the plight that this woman has put the pair o' you in, that I've come to grant ye whatsomever last wish the wish o' your hearts may be."

"May the heavens bless you and your kind, forever and forever," says Barney.

"Oh, leprechawn, darlin', then let me wish," Norah was beginnin'.

But "Hold your whist, woman!" says Barney, says he, "or you'll sink the bottom out o' the bog that you've brought us both to. 'Tis me blame and shame that I let so witless a woman have her way for so long. Just," says Barney, says he to the leprechawn, "laive us both back where we

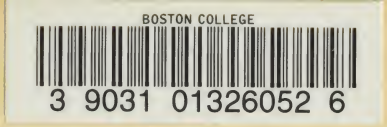
were again, a dacint, respectable, happy, gray-haired old man and wife."

"More power to you!" says the leprechawn, givin' a fling of a dance upon the branch he was perched on—and sendin' a heavy shower of hawthorn bloom over the head and shoulders of the up-gazin' pair.

And when they shook the drifts of flowers out o' their eyes, the leprechawn had disappeared. Both o' them then looked at one another in wonder—Barney's eyes beholdin' before him his own sweet old wrinkled woman again, worth her weight in goold—and Norah's, her own dacint old man Barney, every gray hair on whose head better than a string o' pearls!

Under the fairy thorn they embraced, and kissed a lovin' kiss, and with arms about aich another's waists went home, the joyfulest lovers that the winds o' the world blew upon.

And from that day out, in their little cabin, crammed to the riggin' with content, and hearkenin' forever to the cricket's song, they never afterward knew an hour less joyful.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